SCRIPTURES OPENED;

AND

Sundry Caſes of Conſcience reſolved, in Plain and Practical Anſwers

TO

SEVERAL QUESTIONS,

Upon the Proverbs of *Solomon*, *Eccleſiaſtes*, *Jeremiah*, *Lamentations*, *Ezekiel*, and *Daniel*.

By that faithful Servant of JESUS CHRIST, *William Thomas* Maſter of Arts, Late Rector of the Church at *Upley*, in the County of *Somerſet*.

Mark 4. 1.

When he was alone, they that were about him, asked him of the Parable,--And he anſwered--

Jeſu bone! quo illa fervore? quo ſtudio intenta erat divinis voluminibus? quæſtiones & proponens & ſolutas recondens in Scriniolo pectoris ſui. Hieronym. *ad* Oceanumde Fabiola.

LONDON,

Printed for *Sampſon Evans*, Bookſeller in *Worceſter*. 1675.

The Epiſtle to the Chriſtian and Religious Reader; with an Advertiſement or two, touching the Reverend Authour and the following Work.

DEad Parents live in the Natural Iſſue of their Bodies; Dead Paſtours in their Spiritual off-Spring, thoſe Babes brought forth by their Soul-travels, who are *the Epiſtle of Chriſt* (a) *miniſtred by them, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the Living God, not in Tables of Stone, but in the fleſhly Tables of the heart:* And many times they live among Survivours in the Poſthumous Children of their brains, more to be valued by far than the fruit of the Womb, in that they prove a more Laſting Monument to the me-

(a) 2 Cor. 3.3.

mory of their Fathers, and much more fruitful in propagating a Holy Seed in the Church from Generation to Generation.

The Authour of these ensuing Questions and Cases *being dead* (b) *yet speaketh* by and liveth in them both: God honoured him with the Success of his publick-Ministerial Labours whilest Living. Many (we doubt not) went to Heaven from under his Ministry before their *Spiritual Father*, (c) leaving him for a while to provide for the younger Children of the Houshold of Faith at *Ubley*, who are now growing, and going after their Father and Spiritual Brethren to their Heavenly Fathers House; blessing God for him who (through the Blessing of God) proved so effectual an Instrument of their Translation out of an estate of *Sin* and *Misery* (d) *into an estate of Sanctity and Salvation.* Now he is dead, he lives again and speaks also by

b) Heb. 11.4.

c) Cor. 4.14.

Act. 26. 8,

by the mouth of the Son of his old-Age; perfectly formed before his death, but left to the Midwifry of our care (as the bequeſt of his Special Love) to be brought forth by a Timely and Seaſonable publication. Pity! ſuch a Benjamin ſhould be ſtrangledin the birth, or being born ſhould die again without doing ſome ſignal Service for the Seed of *Jacob*. Oh that he may uſher them into the acceptance, and ſhew them the face of Jeſus!

To which end we deſire thee (ChriſtianReader)not only to make what is here offered of thy Company, but alſo of thy Council, by taking all down to dwell with thee, yea in thee by diligent Reading and Meditation. All is but little for bulk, but leſs than all is big, and goes with much matter of worth and weight; no leſs uſeful for the direct aſpect it hath upon the Practical parts of Godlineſs according to truth, than grateful by reaſon of

the variety and brevity; many short lines being herein drawn in different colours but all meeting in the Centre of that *Truth which is after Godliness.* (e)

(e) Tit. 1. 1.

But it needs not large Letters of Commendation from us to procure it a welcome Entertainment: It will sufficiently commend itself to the truly Conscientious; and it is sufficient to say here, *Tolle, lege.* He that will read what is written with an enlightned eye, must needs see so much Sanctity in it joyned with so much Sobriety, so much Art mixed with so much Divinity, so much matter crowded together in so few words, such depth of Judgment in such plainness of Speech; that after he hath lightly tasted of that Spirit which animates the whole and every part, will (questionless) thirst after a full draught and cry, Give, Give.

Therefore, not to hinder thee from passing along thorough the Porch

Porch of a brief Preface into the Houſe, and viewing the ſeveral Rooms adorned with the Glory of Divine Truths, we ſhall only advertiſe thee of theſe following particulars.

That theſe Miſcellanies of Expoſitions, Queſtions and Caſes, are preſented to publick view as they were left to us by that Holy man Mr. *William Thomas* without any Addition, Subſtraction or Alteration. The very ſame body now appears in the very ſame dreſs into which it was put by the Reverend Authour now with God; except any exceſſes or literal defects happen to it by the preſs, or a queſtion or two be Tranſplaced for Methods ſake or the greater advantage of the Reader.

That theſe Queſtions and Caſes were no other than Family-Exerciſes either propounded by him, or to him, and anſwered by himſelf, only when alone with thoſe of his

own house: and being Household-impartments were designed to be imparted to the household of Faith; for the assistance of younger Ministers by furnishing them with many materials for buildings; but especially for the help of Housholders and all honest-hearted private Christians, who have too little time to lay out in Reading the voluminous discourses of Casuistical Divines, or consult with many Interpreters about the sence of such Scriptures as are *hardly understood*, (f) *easily wrested*, and here clearly opened. The great plainness and familiarity of the Phrase and Style, together with the direct tendency every particular hath to practice, are undeniable evidences that the whole was intended for the profit of such people.

(f) 2 Pet. 3.16.

That some of these things are layd out more largely as the matter required, and time gave leave; others are confined within a narrower

er compaſs; for the ſame difficulties occur not in every caſe, nor intricacies in every Queſtion or Scripture: but there is nothing offered that coſt the Authour nothing. All his Writings ſmell of the Lamp, and theſe Anſwers and Reſolutions are full of Labour. Though this Workman never liked the expence of precious time on formal curioſities, and was wont to be much diſpleaſed with thoſe Preachers who conformed to the tedious builders of *Diana's* Temple for the magnifying of their Art; yet he was always very curious of his matter, and thought that what grew up in a night like *Jonah's Gourd* (*g*), was fit to continue no longer than it did which periſhed in a night: He that builds for Eternity had need be conſiderate in his preparations, and conſtantly induſtrious in his works.

(g) Jonah 4. 6, 7.

To end, whatſoever is here preſented to thy view is the Child of many Prayers as well as much Meditation

ditation; and the Father of it (whileſt Living) was as frequent with *the Father of Lights* (*h*) for a bleſſing on it; as *Auguſtine's* Mother for her Son. He miſcarried not, but was a Shining Light in the Firmament of the Church. We truſt this will not miſs the Author's ends on thee, which were Gods Glory and thy Good, by leading thee into the Land of Light, and leaving in thee an encreaſe of Light. For the attaining whereof we ſhall be daily Suitors at the Throne of Grace, and moſt ready to manifeſt our ſelves the helpers of thy Faith, and

(h) Jam. 1. 17.

Thy Servants for
Jeſus Sake.

John Chetwind,
Rich. Fairclough,
William Rawlins.

A Table of the Scriptures, that are open'd more largely in this Book, and of the Queſtions that are grounded on them.

Proverbs

Page.

CHAP. 10.11,19. *If abundant words (like a Well) be good, how then is there ſin in many words?* 1.

Chap. 11.26. *Is it abſolutely unlawful to withhold corn from publick ſale?* 8.

Chap. 13.22,24. *What courſe ſhould Parents take to provide well for their Children?* 15.

Chap. 17.22. *What helps are there for that mirth which is ſo commodious, and ſo much commended?* 19.

Chap. 23.1,2,3. *What Rules doth* Solomon *give concerning feaſting and carnal luſts?* 33.

Chap. 23.4,5. *What counſel doth* Solomon *give for the reſtraint of Worldly luſts?* 42.

Chap. 25. 8,9,10. *What's* Solomon's *advice concerning the vice of Strife and Contention?*

tention? 49.

Chap. 28.14. *What is there in fear that by reason of that a man should be pronounced blessed?* 54.

Chap. 28.14. *What hardness of heart is that which makes men fall into mischief?* 60.

Ecclesiastes.

Chap. 1.2. *What doth this Book (in sum) hold forth to us as concerning Vanity?* 67.

Chap. 7.10. *Doth* Solomon *absolutely bind us up from saying the former times were better than these?* 73.

Chap. 7.16,17 *What may* Solomon *mean by just Overmuch, and wicked Overmuch?* 79.

Chap. 9.1,2. *Is it absolutely so that all things come alike to all?* 89.

Chap. 9.7,8,9. *Are the words of these verses the precepts of* Solomon *? or the sayings of sensualists?* 97.

Chap. 5.5. *What grounds are there for the continuance and use of Vows in Gospel-times?* 108.

Isaiah.

Chap. 9.6,7. *What's the Reason that Christ is so much mentioned in the Prophecies of the old-Testament and promises of Church-Deli-*

Deliverances? 165.

Chap. 38.3. *What course are we to take for death-bed comfort?* 189.

Chap. 40.18. *Why doth the Lord speak so much in his Word against Idolatry and Idolaters?* 205.

Chap. 42.1.3. *What is meant by Christ's bringing forth judgment unto Truth or Victory?* 199.

Chap. 45. 23: *Whence is it that the bowing of every Knee to God is so remarkably, yea with a Divine Oath, prophecied of in this Text?* 210.

Chap. 45.23. *latter part: How is swearing an evidence and special Character of subjection unto, and owning of the true God?* 214.

Chap. 53.1. *What's the reason why so few in all ages have entertained the Gospel?* 223.

Chap. 63.17. *How can God be said to cause to err, and to harden the hearts of his People from his ways?* 238.

Jeremiah.

Chap. 36.11. *How is* Judah *said to be worse than* Israel, *especially in* Josiah's *days so eminent a Reformer?* 244.

Chap. 3.16. *Why is it said in so many words, the Ark of the Lord shall be no more minded?* 249.

Chap. 6.16. *What is the way to Soul-Rest?*

Rest? 255.

Chap. 7.21, 22. *Did not God command Sacrifices and ceremonial things in the time of the Old-Testament?* 262.

Chap. 12.5. *What may be the meaning and use of these enigmatical words?* Jer.12. 5. 266.

Chap. 20.14. *How is it possible so holy a man as* Jeremy *was, should speak so strange words?* 271.

Chap.28.2,3,4. *When one Minister says one thing, and another (with as much confidence) says the contrary, How shall People know which to believe?* 278.

Chap. 29.7. *Why should the People of God seek the Peace of* Babylon *wherein they were miserable Captives under a cruel Tyrant?* 283.

Chap.31.31. *Whence is it that* Jeremy *speaks of a new-Covenant, and what doth he say of it?* 289.

Chap. 36.5,6. *What are the Duties of a fasting day, especially of a publick fast?* 311.

Chap.38.1,2. *How could the People deliver themselves to the King of* Babylon, *and yet keep fidelity to* Zedekiah *their own King?* 316.

Chap.38.37. *Did* Jeremy *well in giving such a partial answer to the Princes, or is he to*

Family-Instructions in the resolving of Scripture-questions. Most of them out of the *Proverbs* of *Solomon*.

Prov. 10. 11, 19.

V. 11. *The mouth of the Righteous, is a Well-spring of Life.*

V. 19. *In the multitude of words there wanteth not Sin; but he that refraineth his lips, is wise.*

Quest. IF *abundant Words (like a Well) be good: How then is there Sin in* many words?

Answ. First, No doubt but a Righteous Mouth is a springing Well of living Water; * and the fuller that Well, and the freer that Spring is, the

2 Chron. 32. 8.

better it is. All therefore ſhould be careful that they do not hinder themſelves or others of this Water.

This may be done divers ways, *viz.*

1. On their part whoſe Mouth is a Well, and that are able to ſupply much life unto others, becauſe *a Stone is rolled on the wells mouth*, *Gen.* 29 .2,8,10. And there be ſome good men to whom there is not an eaſie acceſs; Hence the Sheep of Chriſt are not watered as they might and ſhould be (eſpecially the weaker and lower of them that cannot roll the ſtone from the wells mouth), albeit, when the ſtone is rolled away, there will be water enough.

2. On their part that have need to come to the Well, and that are near to it; And that two ways:

1. For want of provocation and giving occaſion to ſpeak; As Pumps be divers times dry for want of putting ſome water in to get up more.

2. For want of proſecution, and taking ſome more pains to procure and pump out that which is to be had in abundance, and yet, not with eaſe nor with-

without ability and diligence in enquiring, asking queſtions, * moving doubts. There be ſome † deep Draw-wells; and if men have nothing to draw with, How ſhall they come by the water? See for this, *Prov.* 20. 5. with *Prov.* 18. 4.

* 1 Kings 10. 1, 3.
† John 4. 11.

3. Too much on both parts, becauſe the wells be *ſtop'd with earth*, as *Gen.* 26. 15. that is, becauſe for want of an heavenly mind; want of conſcience to redeem the time, and make the beſt of every good opportunity, common conference comes in ſo faſt, and is reliſhed ſo well, that ſpiritual *wells* are not look'd after; and if men of good minds open their mouths and ſomething ſpring forth, it's like water ſpilt on the ground, loſt becauſe not priz'd, and ſo there is ſcarce any care to bring a Veſſel to receive and keep it.

But, for all this, Righteous men as they ought to have, ſo they will have many good words; for they ſpeak *oft one to another*, *Mal.* 3. 16. and in many ſuch meetings there cannot be few words; Miniſters eſpecially are to uſe *many words*, *Eccleſ.* 12. 9. *Acts* 2. 40. & 20. 11.

Nor are words ſinful, meerly becauſe

they are many; for there is a ſinful ſilence aſwel as a ſinful ſpeaking; and to ſpeak too-little, a fault aſwel as to ſpeak too-much, 1 *Kings* 1. 6.

This may be ſaid with reſpect to the 11 *verſe*. *Secondly*, for the 19 *verſe*, It is true alſo, that *in the multitude of words there wanteth not Sin.* It is not ſaid, In the multitude of *righteous mens* words (whoſe mouth is *a well-ſpring of life*), nor, in many words that be ſpoken with good advice; but in many words, when no reſtraint is put upon the lips, and when the mouth is not watched and governed by the wiſdom that is in the heart; * then it's true, that it is like an over-flowing River that gathers dirt. It is not to be denied but that many words may be ſpoken by ſome men to very good purpoſe, as by *Paul*, *Acts* 28. 23. but yet, Take people as they are ordinarily (yea, put divers good people among them) and experience will tell us, that it is neither eaſie nor uſual to ſpeak much of much weight, the tongue in many being too quick for the head, and the mouth running before the mind; And herein, this is to be obſerved, that albeit much may be ſpoken well,

* Eccleſ. 5. 3.

well, out of occaſion, and when there is a buſineſs that requires it; yet when words are multipli'd out of a talkative diſpoſition, and a mind to ſpeak rather than a juſt cauſe of ſpeaking, then ſin is not like to be wanting, but in many things it doth and will ſhew it ſelf; Namely, In theſe Particulars:

1. In ſpeaking much of other mens Perſons, whom, if talking people diſlike, they quickly call their good, evil; If they like; their evil, good. And (howſoever) they are more bold and buſie with others behind their back, than they would be, or could defend if they were before their face. Iſa. 5. 20.

2. In ſpeaking of other mens matters; for which, if they come to ſuffer (as divers times they do) there's little comfort for them, becauſe the Rule is that none ſhould ſuffer as *a buſie body in other mens matters*, 1 *Pet.* 4. 15. What haſt thou to do with another mans buſineſs any more than with another mans Servant, * to judg and thruſt in thy Verdict without any juſt cauſe and call? *Rom. 14. 4.

3. In ſpeaking of things generally, irregularly, *viz.*

1. Untruly, becauſe haſtily, without

due enquiry. Any sleight Report and Tale will serve the turn to set a work the tongue of a sudden speaker. We may see this fault in worse men, as the misbelieving Jews, *Matth.* 28. 15. yea, and herein, a want of wariness in better men, as in the holy *Brethren*, *John* 21. 23.

2. Unwisely, unsavourily, unseasonably without due consideration of circumstances, and so *unacceptably*, *Prov.* 10. 32. (as divers will huddle up a great deal of business, and mar all by not-minding how they do it) such words are like a Cart that's off its wheels, or a Door that's off its hinges, when a word spoken *upon his wheels*, *Prov.* 25. 11. is like *Apples of gold in pictures of silver*; Not as Vinegar on nitre, *Prov.* 25. 20.

3. Idlely and unprofitably; a world of words that do no good in the world, and cart-loads, in buying and selling, *Matth.* 12. 36. Here's folly by heap; whereas, *He that refraineth his lips is wise*; that is, He that refraineth from speaking.

1. *What* he ought not, *Psal.* 73. 15.

2. *When* he ought not, *Psal.* 39. 1. *Amos* 5. 13.

3. *As*

3. *As* he ought not, *Prov.* 26. 4. See *Jude v.* 9. there was a real accuſation in *Michael's* Prayer, *The Lord rebuke thee*; but he forbore *a railing accuſation.*

Now, To abſtain from ſpeaking, when a man cannot, or liſt not, is no vertue; To abſtain, when a man ſhould not abſtain, is a vice, and may deprive others of that which is as pretious as Silver, *ver.* 20. as neceſſary as food, *ver.* 21. as deſirable as life; as before in this Verſe, where the lips are called *a Well-ſpring of life.*

But, To refrain ſo, as to be able to ſay, This I might, this I could; eſpecially, this I would, and have a great mind to ſpeak; but I forbear, becauſe I find it is not fit to ſpeak it; this is true Wiſdom.

Prov. 11. 26.

He that with-holdeth Corn, the People ſhall Curſe him: but Bleſſing ſhall be upon the head of him that ſelleth Corn.

Qu. *IS it abſolutely unlawful to lay up Corn; or to keep it at any time from the Market?*

Anſw. The Anſwer may be Affirmative and Negative.

1. *Affirmative*]; In divers Caſes Corn may be laid up and with-held from publick Sale; As

1. In a way of prudence for the publick good; ſo in great Cities (as in *London*) there are ſeveral Granaries for the Supply of poorer people at an eaſier rate if Dearth ſhould ariſe; unto which may be referred the taking in of Corn in a greater quantity, into a City like to be beſieged; for, in ſuch a caſe Nature and Reaſon teacheth Men to keep what they can from the Enemy, 2 *Chron.* 32. 4. and to get and ſtore up all that is needful for themſelves, 1 *Kings* 20. 22.

2. E-

2. Every Man is to lay up and keep what is neceſſary and convenient for the ſuſtenance of himſelf and Family, and Relations (though out of his Family); for, not to do ſo is againſt the Humanity of Heathens, and the Faith of Chriſtians, that teacheth to love and take care for, thoſe eſpecially that are more nearly related to us, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. *Prov.* 27. 27. 1 *Tim.* 5. 16. *Joſeph* had reaſon out of a ſpecial reſpect to his Father and Brethren, that their lives might be preſerved, to keep in ſtore the Corn of *Egypt*, as well as for other publick uſes, *Gen.* 45. 7.

3. Even in time of Scarcity, Men are not to have all that they would have, but to be ſtinted, that Proviſion may hold out the better if the Dearth ſhould continue and grow to a greater height, *Gen.* 45. 6.

2. Negative]; Corn ſhould never be with-held.

1. Out of infidelity, and diſtruſt of any return of plenty, 2 *Kings* 7. 1, 2, 3. 1 *Kings* 17. 13, 14. eſpecially when there is a preſent and grievous want of Proviſion among many poor people, 1 *John* 3. 17. To keep from others ready to ſtarve that

* 1 John 3. 15, 17. I may get more is murther *; their neceſſity is to be preferred before my gain and utility; yea, their extremity before my leſſer neceſſity, 2 *Cor.* 8. 2. 1 *Kings* 17. 9, 11. See *Jer.* 37. 21. even in a ſtarved City, a *Jeremy* (though a Priſoner) ſhould have Bread, *Prov.* 3. 28.

* Luk. 12. 15. 2. Nor out of Covetouſneſs *, and a greedy deſire of a greater price: To project to ſell any thing dearer, meerly becauſe a man gapes after gain is unlawful at any time; for it ſets up a ſelf-end, *Jer.* 47. 5. *Luke* 12. 21. *Jam.* 4. 14. To be provident to diſcharge a Duty is good, as to make honeſt proviſion for my ſelf and Family; to pay debts, 2 *Kings* 4. 7. to help thoſe in neceſſity. And to trouble a mans houſe for want of judgment or care to order things diſcreetly, is a ſinful thing, *Prov.* 11. 29. & 13. 13. But providence to diſcharge a Duty is one thing, projecting and fore-caſting to ſatisfie a luſt, is another thing, and a wicked thing, *Luke* 12. 18, 19. See 1 *Kings* 21. 7, 8. *Micah* 2. 1, 2. *Jam.* 4. 3.

And to this evil with-holding and With-holder, that which followeth in the Text is to be applied, *viz. the people*

ſhall

ſhall curſe him; which they oft do, ſinfully, but yet, if they do not curſe cauſleſly, it may light heavily on them that give occaſion to it, as that Scripture ſhews, *Exod.* 22. 23. --- *Mal.* 2. 2. *Job* 31. 16, 22.

But Bleſſing ſhall be upon the head of him that ſelleth Corn; Albeit (perhaps) not from the poor (who are more ready to curſe when they want than to bleſs when they abound), yet it may be expected from God, on them that out of Conſcience and Charity, ſell Corn; for God uſeth to ſupply thoſe more abundantly, who freely part with that they have for others ſupport, as *Prov.* 3. 9, 10. 2 *Chron.* 31. 10. *Mal.* 3. 9, 10. This is more conſiderable in our Land, where Corn is Meat and Drink both.

Queſt. *May I not take my opportunity to ſell when things be at the beſt Rate?*

Anſw. Yes, So it be without my detaining from others (with others that do as I do) that ſuſtenance which at preſent they dearly want. And therefore I may do ſo, and take the advantage of a greater price, becauſe I am to

uſe

uſe all lawful providence for my maintenance, and the increaſe of my Eſtate, *Prov.* 27. 23.

Obj. *But if I with-hold to a dearer time, then the Market will be dearer at preſent than if I brought in, and ſo the poor will fare the worſe.*

Anſw. 1. If every man ſhould bring out at one time, it would be ſo much dearer for poor people at another, becauſe there would be leſs to be brought or bought.

2. If Corn-Maſters ſhould ſtill bring in to the Market, and ſell away their Store when there is more Plenty, this would make people groan the more if God ſhould ſend Scarcity, becauſe there would be leſs to ſupply their need when it's grown far greater.

3. It's very fit that the Husbandman ſhould live (by whoſe Induſtry all other men live, *Eccleſ.* 5. 9.) as well as they that have nothing to husband, (which even the Scripture it ſelf minds us of, 1 *Cor.* 9. 7. 2 *Tim.* 2. 6.) which yet he could not do (with that advantage to his Eſtate that is needful for his

his encouragement) if he ſold off all at the loweſt rate.

Out of what hath been ſpoken, there may be obſerved for our further uſe, theſe following Things.

1. The wretchedneſs of many poor people ; If you with-hold Corn, they quickly curſe ; But if Sermons be with-held from them, What complaint is there ? though the one be a periſhing, the other an ever-enduring nouriſhment, (*John* 6. 27.) yea, How many have declared a luſt to *the old Law*, that is, to Popery, becauſe then all was cheap, and they might have Corn and Belly-ſtuff at an eaſier rate than now, though their Souls ſtarved ? But if a Man after Gods own heart (*Acts* 13. 22.) will curſe for any thing, it is for being unjuſtly kept off from Gods own Houſe and ſpiritual Table, 1 *Sam.* 26. 19. See *Job* 23. 12.

2. See here what a fearful thing it is in Miniſters (and *woful to them*, 1 *Cor.* 9. 17.) to with-hold from poor people (that receive the Goſpel) the *Corn of Heaven*, *Pſal.* 78. 24. *Iſa.* 30. 24. and not bring it forth on the Lords Market-day

day, *Rev.* 3. 18. Oft People curſe where God doth not; but in this Caſe, God will curſe though People do not, *Mal.* 2. 2, 7, 8, 9. *Iſa.* 56. 9, 10.--- Famine is the worſt of Judgments, *Lam.* 4. 9. a Famine *not of Bread but of the Word of God*, is the worſt of Famines, *Amos* 8. 11, 13. becauſe the Soul is the beſt of Man, *Mat.* 16. 26. To affamiſh the Soul therefore, is the *worſt* of Murthers, to the *leaſt* of which the curſe of God is due, and denounced. *Deut.* 27. 24.

3, And this alſo ſhews that it is not a ſafe but a ſad and dangerous thing for any righteous perſons (whoſe lips ſhould *feed many*, *Prov.* 10. 21.) to with-hold from their Company that holy Conference which (like the Staff of Bread) might be a great ſtay to them, and keep them from fainting. *If thou* (ſaith *Bernard* *) *being adorned with the gifts of knowledg and eloquence, doſt through fear, ſloth, or an indiſcreet humility, bind up by an unprofitable and damnable ſilence that good Word which may profit many, truly thou art curſed, becauſe thou hideſt Corn from the People.*

* Super Cantic. Serm. 18. Fol. 134.

4. If the Bleſſing of God ſhall be on him that ſelleth Corn, and takes Money for

for it, How much more on them that *caſt their Bread upon the Waters, Eccleſ.* 11. 1. and give *Bread-corn* to them that cannot live without it, and yet have no Money to give them for it?

Prov. 13. 22.

A good Man leaves an Inheritance for his Childrens Children.

Ver. 24. *He that ſpareth his Rod, hateth his Son; but he that loveth him, chaſteneth him betimes.*

Qu. *WHat courſe ſhould Parents take to provide well for their Children?*

Anſw. They ſhall provide well for them by being themſelves good Perſons and good Parents.

Firſt, By being good Perſons]; For therein is contained, a ſeeking of Gods Kingdom and his Righteouſneſs, whereupon outward things are added, *Matth.* 6. 33. And what's added to the Fathers Eſtate, comes by ordinary courſe to the Child,

Child, 2 *Cor.* 12. 14. It's a *good man* that leaves an Inheritance to his Childrens Children as *David* did, 1 *Chron.* 29. 28. *Pſal.* 89. 27, 29. as *Job* did, *Job* 42. 15, 16. When the Wealth of the Sinner is laid up for the Juſt, as we ſee of old it was, 2 *Sam.* 12. 8. 2 *Chron.* 20. 25. *Eſther* 8. 2. Thus it is the rather, becauſe a good Man uſeth his own good endeavours to augment his Eſtate. And that two ways; For,

1. He uſeth a good Conſcience in getting what he hath, in a lawful, ſolid, and approved way, and not by vanity and unlawful ſhifts, which whoſoever uſeth may look to have his Eſtate diminiſhed, *ver.* 11. and not to hold out to the third Heir, as the good Mans gettings do, *v.* 22. *Prov.* 20. 21.

2. He uſeth labour and diligence, and that is followed with encreaſe, *ver.* 11. By this means a poorer Man hath much Food; for by his diligence, he begetteth experience and diſcretion for the ordering of his Affairs. When he that hath more, hath leſs, to wit, for *want of judgment* to make the beſt of that he hath, *Prov.* 13. 23.

Secondly, By being good Parents],

ſo they provide well for their Childrens good in two eſpecial Ways.

1. By their godly Inſtructions and wiſe Laws, as here, *v.* 1. & *v.* 14. & *chap.* 3. 1. The Fathers Piety is the Childs Portion; inaſmuch, as by his good Education, he walks in Gods way to make him godly; and if once he can be brought to godlineſs, that godlineſs will (according to Gods Promiſe, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8.) bring in enough of the things of this life. A ſanctified Son ſhall have a *ſatisfied Soul*, and it's the *belly of the wicked that wants*, *v.* 25. Yea, however the Children of a godly Father prove, yet we find an outward advantage for Wife and Children, when it could be ſaid, *Thou knoweſt thy Servant* (the Husband, the Father) *feared the Lord*, 2 *Kings* 4. 1.

2. By their loving, reſolute, diſcreet and ſeaſonable Correction]. To ſpare the Rod is to ſpoil the Child, *v.* 24. for as the Earth is full of briars and thorns, ſo are Children, of corruption by *Adam*'s Sin, which quickly ſhews it ſelf in actual Sin. Now as it is ſome ſharp Inſtrument that muſt get out briars and thorns; ſo ſome ſeverity muſt be uſed

to get out ſinful fooliſhneſs, *Prov.*22.15. Hence ariſeth a neceſſity of correction, and that for inſtruction and better education; For who would ſow among thorns?

A ſpecial circumſtance of this correction is the uſing of it *betimes*; for by that means it works more eaſily, while the Child is tender, and Vice not ſettled; and more effectually, the Cure being moſt throughly wrought, and the return of the Diſeaſe beſt prevented by taking it at firſt. This is ſo neceſſary that *Solomon* ſaith here, *He* (and ſo that ſeemingly-loving *Shee*) *that ſpares the Rod, hates the Son*; not that there is the affection of hatred in them, but there is the effect of it on the uncorrected Child. And while fondneſs works as ill an effect as the worſt hatred would do, Is it not juſtly called hatred? What could Parents do worſe, if they hated their Children never ſo much, than to bring them to the Gallows, and thither forbearing the Rod, and timely rebuking of their vitious diſpoſition, brings them, there to make a Sermon (with a Rope about their neck) and that againſt their Parents, for ſuffering them to have

their

their will so much in the beginning of their time, warning all other Parents to take heed of the like child-pleasing, and child-undoing course.

Which also should teach all Children to submit to correction; for if one should ask them, Whether would you have your Parents love you or hate you? what Child hath so little wit, but will answer, he would have their Love? he must not therefore refuse their Rod.

Prov. 17. 22.

A merry Heart doth good like a Medicine; but a broken Spirit drieth the bones.

Qu. *What Helps are there for that Chearfulness that* Solomon *so much commendeth?*

Ans. This may be answered { 1. More generally. 2. More particularly.

First, More generally, with respect unto, and by the opening of this Text. As to which, it may be observed, that e-

ven an heart, naturally merry, and chearful by conſtitution and natural temper, (*a*) is a good Medicine, (*A*) Whereas by Sorrow of Heart, Men are much broken, *Prov.* 15. 13.

(*a*) Or outward ſatisfaction, 1 *Kings* 4. 20.

(*A*) Dr. *Quiet*, Dr. *Dyet*, Dr. *Merryman*, are all good Phyſicians, and the laſt not the leaſt help to Health.

But that merry Heart, which is the beſt Medicine, is that Heart which the Light of Gods Countenance rejoiceth, *Pſal.* 4. 6, 7, 8. *Nehem.* 8. 10. and which ariſeth from a good Conſcience, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12.

This merry Heart makes us (like a Medicine) to be in better plight in the whole man as appeareth in the Countenance, (*Iſa.* 2. 18.) which the Heart cheareth up, maketh chearful, and (as the *Hebrew* Expreſſion is) *Goodeneth* *. Hereupon alſo, it makes us more able, vigorous and dexterous in all our actions, *Nehem.* 8. 10. whence we find in Scripture, that weak *Iſaac* calls for ſavoury Meat †, (ſuch as would refreſh his Heart) that he might the better bleſs his Son. And *Eliſha* calls for a Minſtrel that his Heart being compoſed and quickened, he might be fitter to re-

* Prov. 15. 13. Bonificat. טוב

† Gen. 27. 4.

receive the Prophetical Inſpirations, 2 *Kings* 3. 15. ſo that it concerns all Chriſtians in point of Conſcience to labour to be chearful.

1. In regard of God], becauſe he loves a chearful Giver, requires joy in his ſervice, *Deut.* 16. 14. *Iſa.* 56. 7. and utterly diſlikes tears on his Altar, *Mal.* 2. 13.

2. In regard of Men, becauſe otherwiſe, they will be injurious and tedious to Society; for not only Princes love not to look upon Mourners (and therefore *Mordecai* muſt keep off, *Eſth.* 1. 2. and *Nehemiah* is queſtioned, *Nehem.* 2. 2.) but even Parents themſelves do not well endure puling and crying Children, but becauſe they be ſo troubleſome to every body they muſt be had out of the room.

That which is oppoſed to this merry and chearful heart, is a *broken ſpirit*, which is ſo far from doing good to the body *like a Medicine*, as that (like the worſt Diſeaſe) it *drieth the bones*, it preys upon and conſumes that natural and radical moiſture whereby life is preſerved. Albeit there be many ailings, yet while a man can ſay *I am heart-whole*,

though we be ſorry for his pain, yet we fear not his life; for, *a ſound Heart is the life of the Fleſh*, *Prov.* 14. 30. but when the Spirit is once broken, (and broken it is by the ſorrow of the Heart, *Prov.* 15. 13.) then *the bones will rot*, and unleſs it can be healed, there's little hope of any long life, and no hope of health; for, a Spirit very ſad, will *eat no Bread*, 1 *Kings* 21. 5. Or, if Bread and Suſtenance be taken, yet the Body will not prove and thrive with it, 2 *Sam.* 13. 2, 4.

So much being ſpoken of the hurt of a broken ſpirit here, and the good of a broken ſpirit other-where, *Pſal.* 51. 17. (though the Word in the Original be not the ſame) it giveth occaſion of adjoining to this general explication, theſe two Rules.

1. *Avoid Sadneſs*], that is, all that ſorrow (whatſoever it be) that is not according to God and his Word, 2 *Cor.* 7. 9. But as the former part of this Verſe favours not ſinful Mirth, becauſe that ends in the moſt heart-breaking ſorrow, *Prov.* 14. 13. as we ſee in *Belſhazzar*, *Dan.* 5. 4, 5. So the latter part ſaith nothing againſt godly Sorrow; nor is it to be ſpoken againſt. 1. Be-

1. Becauſe it is a Duty, (*Joel* 2. 12. *Jam.* 4. 9.) and God hath not appointed Duties to kill Men; therefore his Comforts are at hand to take away the extremity of the grief, 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. *Joel* 2. 13, 14. yet even this Sorrow alſo may be harmful by the exceſs of it; but ſo it is not a Duty, but the Device of Satan is to be looked upon in it, 2 *Cor.* 2. 7, 11.

2. Becauſe godly Sorrow is a ſpecial means of getting that glad Heart ſpoken of in the former part of the Verſe, inaſmuch as it is followed, not only with pardon of ſin, (2 *Sam.* 12. 13. *Pſal.* 51. 17. and outward comfort, (*Joel* 2. 17, 18, 19.) cauſing joy, *ver.* 23. but alſo with converſion to God, amendment of life, and everlaſting ſalvation, 2 *Cor.* 7. 10. ſo that ſuch may rejoice that they were made ſorry, *ver.* 9.

2. *See to thy ſadneſs*], that it be upon juſt and conſiderable reaſon; Let an hundred hearts be broken for a going into *Bathſheba*, *Pſal.* 51. *Tit. v.* 17. Let a *Nehemiah* look ſad and ſpare not, for the dilapidations and deſolations of the Church of God, and the *broken Walls of Jeruſalem*, *Nehem.* 1. 3. & 2. 3. But, to

break a mans heart for diſaſters, haply conceited, and in imagination only, or at leaſt, of ſmall conſideration; as, becauſe others eſteem me not as I expect, content me not as I deſire, becauſe every thing frames not [point-vice] as I would have it; becauſe others look not upon me as I would they ſhould, or as they were wont to do, *Gen.* 31. 2. this, in the judgment of nature, is a folly and madneſs, and in the judgment of Scripture, murther; for ſuch ſorrow *drieth the bones*, as it is here, waſteth the marrow, and *cauſeth death*, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. Look what *Paul* ſaid to the *Corinthians*, *If I make you ſorry, Who ſhall make me glad?* 2 *Cor.* 2. 2. that may be ſaid in this caſe: If I break and bear down my ſpirit, What ſhall bear up me? for *it is the ſpirit of a man that ſuſtains his infirmity*; but where the ſpirit that ſhould bear up, comes to be born up it ſelf as a broken thing, that *wounded ſpirit, Who can bear? Prov.* 18. 14.

Wiſe are they that ſo govern their joys and ſorrow, as to be able to ſay [for their joy], *It is meet we ſhould make merry and be glad*, *Luke* 15. 32. And [for their ſorrow] as *Nehemiah* did

(in

(in the greateſt preſence, and with the greateſt confidence), *Why ſhould not my countenance be ſad? Nehem.* 2.3. there's all the reaſon in the world for it; And yet we muſt never ſorrow *as they that have no hope*, 1 *Theſ.* 4.13. *Ezra* 10.2.

This is the general Anſwer.

Secondly, Helps to Chearfulneſs will be better diſcerned and more affected by inquiring into ſadneſs; And namely into the cauſes, effects, and cure thereof.

1. The Cauſes of Sadneſs are;

1. Natural], a black and melancholy conſtitution inclining to ſadneſs upon every, yea, upon no occaſion, unto which there is a great addition; and whereof there is a more diſmal operation, by Satan that knows our tempers, and labours to make uſe of this humour for his own advantage, by ſinking the ſpirits of ſuch Perſons, hindring their ſervice, and tempting them by ſadder thoughts to ſadder and horrid acts.

2. Moral] ariſing from ſome cauſe that we think reaſonable, whether outward or ſpiritual.

1. Outward] As an earneſt and exceſſive

ceſſive longing after what we have a mind to, when it is not to be had, 1 *Kings* 21. 3, 4. -- or Fears of wanting what we ſhall need; This divides, depreſſeth, teareth and tireth the heart with thoughts and cares and doubtings, *Luke* 12. 23, 25, 29. or of loſing what we have, *Gen.* 32. 7, 8, & 42. 36, 38. -- And generally, any afflicting thing that we do, or are like to undergo, *Mark* 4. 38, 39, 40. *Iſa.* 37. 3.

3. Spiritual]; As the apprehenſion of our horrible ſin, dangerous guilt, the Wrath of God, and thoſe dreadful things that do accompany it, 2 *Kings* 22. 19. *Nehem.* 8. 9. *Mat.* 27. 3, 4. *Acts* 2. 37, & 16. 39. yea, or the hiding of Gods Face from thoſe who have formerly enjoyed it; who know not how to want it, nor (now) how to have it, *Pſal.* 30. 7. *Job* 34. 29.

2. The effects of ſorrow & deep ſadneſs.

1. The general Effect of it, is that *it makes the heart to ſtoop*, *Prov.* 12. 25. and (as it is here) *to break.*

2. The particular Evils that ariſe from it, are,

1. *Spiritual*; *viz.* the hindring and diſcompoſing of the heart to and in all holy

holy Duties and the exerciſes of Religion, *Levit.* 10. 19. as Hearing the Word, *Exod.* 6. 9. -- Meditation] it's hard to heave up an heavy heart; ſorrow clips the wings that it cannot mount up to Heaven-ward -- So alſo, watching and praying, *Luke* 22. 45. -- or thanksgiving, though there be never ſo great occaſion of it, *Nehem.* 8. 9. Beſides that the burden is ſo great, as that it preſſeth ſinful nature to take unlawful courſes to get it off, as it did *Saul*, on whom God laid a heavy burden, and he went to the Devil to obtain eaſe, 1 *Sam.* 28. 5, 7, 15. And this alſo hinders Men in their particular Calling (for the heavy-hearted are ſlack-handed); It makes them unfit to appear in, and very uncomfortable to humane ſociety, as *David*'s ſorrow by reaſon of the death of *Abſalom* did him, 2 *Sam.* 19. 1, 4, 5.

2. *Outward: It drieth the bones*; for even as in joy, the blood is diſpers'd through all parts of the body, *Prov.* 15. 30. ſo in ſorrow, the blood being recal'd by nature that looks moſt to the vitals, and moſt noble parts, the bones (wherein notwithſtanding the ſtrength of the body lies) are left without moiſture,

ſture, and marrow, and vigour, *Prov.* 3. 8. Beſides, it is injurious to a Mans Name and State, as we ſee in *Joabs* too rough and rude, but not altogether unreaſonable, ſpeech to dejected *David*, 2 *Sam.* 29. 5, 6, 7. yea, ſorrows pierce Men through, 1 *Tim.* 6.10. cauſe death, *Gen.* 42. 38. and of all deaths, the moſt diſmal, as we ſee in *Achitophel* and *Judas* that ſo made away themſelves, unto which Satan hath oft tempted ſad ſpirits not without ſome ſad prevailings. Now

3. For the Cure of this Diſeaſe.

1. If it proceed from nature and conſtitution, natural and reaſonable means are to be uſed, as Phyſick, full Imployment]; for when ſad perſons are ſolitary, and left to the workings of their own hearts, their thoughts, like circles after a ſtone is once thrown into the water, multiply, are widened and enlarged in their heart-ſtraitning way --- And to both the former may be added the variety of chearful company: I mean, with a calling, imployment and buſineſs among them; for idleneſs, vanity, luxury, are not a Medicine for Sorrow, but the matter of it; or if they be, they are like to prove at laſt a Medicine worſe than the Diſeaſe.

2. For

2. For moral Sadneſs, ariſing from ſaddening occaſions and occurrences, Reaſon will be a remedy (as with *David*, 2 *Sam.* 19. 8.) againſt the exceſſive degrees of it, and continuance of it; as we ſee in the ſame *David*, 2 *Sam.* 12. 22. Hence *Elkanah* ſo reaſoneth the caſe with *Hannah*, 1 *Sam.* 1. 8.

Reaſon and diſcretion will teach us not to be ſad.

1. Out of humour, to be affectedly ſowr.

2. Out of phanſie and fear of this or that which now is not, and perhaps will never be.

3. Out of feebleneſs, faint-heartedneſs, for every trifling thing that ſhould be leap'd over, and devoured, *Prov.* 24. 10.

4. Out of tenderneſs, delicacy, (*Deut.* 28. 56.) as if the wind muſt not blow upon us, but we muſt be exempted from the common troubles of mankind, and be like *Adonijah*, *None muſt diſpleaſe us* (nothing muſt diſpleaſe us) *at any time*, 1 *Kings* 16. In all this there's *Will*, ſelf-will, *Tit.* 1. 7. αὐθάδης; But where's the Reaſon? *Why do we not judg of our ſelves that which is right?* Luke 12. 57.

3. Re-

3. Religion is the moſt Soveraign Medicine for all manner of Sadneſs. As

1. Hearing the Word *], *Iſa.* 40.1. & 50. 4. Hence Chriſt, ſeeing and foreſeeing his Diſciples heavineſs, preached ſo many heavenly Sermons upon the approach of his Paſſion, *John* 14. & 15. & 16.

* See Act. 2. 37, Sad: & Ver. 41, Glad.

2. Receiving the Sacrament], Baptiſm made glad the Eunuch, *Acts* 8. 37, 39. and breaking of Bread the firſt Chriſtians, *Acts* 2. 42, 46.

3. Prayer, 1 *Sam.* 2. 18. *Pſalm* 25. 17, 18.

But that which maketh all effectual, is the grace of Faith, *Heb.* 4.2. *John* 14. 1. *Rom.* 15. 13. 1 *Pet.* 1. 8.

The former things mixed with Faith, help,

1. In outward Troubles]: As,

1. In all outward Wants], the believing that God is a Father, that He knows all our neceſſities, *Luke* 12. 30. and will ſupply them, *Phil.* 4. 19. 2 *Sam.* 12. 8.

2. In outward Loſſes and Abatements], the believing that God can give us much more, 2 *Chron.* 25. 9. or the ſame again, 1 *Sam.* 30. 19.

3. In

3. In Danger of Life], the believing that God knows how to deliver, 2 *Pet.* 2.9. and doth do it, 2 *Chron.* 18.31.

More particularly, the believing,

1. That no Evil can come upon us but according to the will of a good God, 1 *Pet.* 4. 19. *Acts* 21. 14.

2. That we need ſuch trials, 1 *Pet.* 1.6.

3. That God will make all work for good, *Rom.* 8. 28.

4. That God will help us to bear all the evil till he bring the good, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *Pſal.* 55.22. *Iſa.* 40. 27, 28, to the end. *Iſa.* 41. 10.

3. In ſpiritual Troubles].

Herein Faith reviveth by looking upon,

1. The Name and Nature of God, which quickeneth Prayer for the Pardon of Sin, *Exod* 34. 6 7, 9. -- *Pſal.* 79. 9. & 25. 11.

2. The Covenant and Promiſes of God, *Heb.* 8. 12. 1 *Sam.* 30. 6. *Jer.* 50. 21. 1 *John* 1. 9. & 2. 1, 2.

3. The Experience of the Church and Children of God, (yea, of the greateſt Sinners) whereby a *Probatum* is put upon this Medicine, *Numb.* 14.19. 1 *Sam.*

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3. That God will make all work for good, *Rom.* 8. 28.

4. That God will help us to bear all the evil till he bring the good, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. *Pſal.* 55. 22. *Iſa.* 40. 27, 28, to the end. *Iſa.* 41. 10.

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1 *Sam.* 12. 20. 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. *Luke* 7. 47. & 18. 14. *Acts* 2. 37, 39, 41.

Theſe Comforts will be better communicated and improved, and this Faith much more fortified, by converſing with godly and chearful Company, *Mal.* 1. 13, 14, 15--- 16. For faint-hearted Perſons make others faint-hearted, *Deut.* 20. 8. But faithful and lively Men put life into others, 2 *Chron.* 22. 7, 8. *Ezra* 10. 2, 3, 4, 5. 2 *Cor.* 7. 5, 6, 7. *Prov.* 12. 25. & 15. 23. & 16. 24.

The Helps ſpoken of before againſt Sadneſs, are Helps alſo unto Chearfulneſs.

Eſpecially, the Spiritual Helps, and *the joy of the Lord, (Nehem.* 8. 10.) *will be our ſtrength* in all Conditions, and in all the Duties required of us, (2 *Chron.* 15. 7, 8, 12.) and the moſt effectual means to keep us from ſinning, 1 *Sam.* 26. 9, 10, 11. And from fainting, *Pſal.* 27. 13, 14. & 4. 6, 1, 2.

Prov. 23. 1, 2, 3.

When thou ſitteſt to eat with a Ruler, conſider diligently what is before thee; And put a Knife to thy Throat if thou be a Man given to thine Appetite: Be not deſirous of his Dainties, for they are deceitful Meat.

Qu. *WHat Rules are there given by* Solomon *for Rulers and daintier Feaſts, and to keep us from being under the power of luſts fortified by ſuch Feaſts?*

Anſw. Before this queſtion be anſwered, it may be needful to anſwer another queſtion, and that is, Why ſo glorious a King, and Pen-man of Scripture as *Solomon* was, ſhould deſcend ſo low as to Table-talk (as it were) and reſtraining of appetite?

Now for ſatisfaction in this and the like Caſes, It may be obſerved:

1. That Scripture-Writers have a ſpecial reſpect to mens Souls and Salvation, yea, to their outward good alſo; and

in order thereunto, give Rules for their ordinary behaviour, that by pleasing their Senses they may not hurt their Souls, or Bodies, or Estates. *Solomon* is ever and anon looking into, and speaking of, disorderly Families, faults and feuds of near Relations, the sluggards Field; Sureties folly, the sin and mischief of Tale-bearers; of angry and contentious Persons, *&c.* And the truth is, the work of a Minister (unto whom *Solomon*, acting the part of a Prophet may be a Patern) I say, the work of a Minister lies much in this, to be a Guide and *Monitor* in reference to the ordinary carriages and miscarriages of those with whom he hath to do; who either will take no notice of, or find ways to shift from general instructions, and things spoken in the air. And we see he that was greater than *Solomon*, even our Lord Jesus Christ purposely applies himself to Table-discourse, *Luke* 14. 7, to *v.* 15.

2. Is it a small matter that People make their belly their God, when that ends in damnation? *Psal.* 3. 19.

3. Here's a higher business than ordinary; for *Solomons* scope seems to be to warn Men, not to affect advance-

ment

ment to the Courts of Princes; or if they be advanced (as *Prov.* 22. 29.) to look to themselves as those that be in a brittle and dangerous condition. More particularly, his intent may be, to move Men to consider seriously the common errour, and attractive to the Courts of Kings and Company of great Men; to wit, the promotions and pleasing provisions that are there; *I shall have the honour to sit with Rulers*, (Esther 5. 12.) *I shall fare as they fare, and enjoy with credit all the contents of nature.* Now it's a great folly to intrude into, or aspire unto the Court, and high Places upon these Considerations; not only in respect of Mens Souls (*Psal.* 141. 4.) but of their State; the standing is very uncertain, the Meat on the Table is deceitful; the Ruler, even when they sit at Table with him, draws out their dispositions, pries into their purposes, detects their insufficiencies, observes if they any way be like to thwart his Pleasure and Designs, and then he will deal with them thereafter. Hence many, that might have lived comfortably, plentifully, and honourably in their own Places and proper Seats, have ruined

See for this *Mercer, Jun. Lavat. in Loc.*

themselves by looking after things too high for them.

This may serve to shew there is nothing here unworthy the Wisdom of *Solomon*, or the Spirit of Wisdom by which he spake.

But what *Solomon* speaks of Rulers-Feasts (and afterwards of Misers-Feasts, *v. 6.*) hath matter of Caution in it in reference to Feasting (especially to greater and higher Feasts) in the generality, wherein our carnal lusts stir so strongly, that it is not easie to keep them within due bounds.

To come then to the Question propounded; There are two Rules laid down here to prevent Excesses, *viz.* Consideration and Mortification.

1. Consideration], *consider diligently*. For matters of content are matters of consideration; yea, of so much the greater consideration because of the content. Hence when *Jobs* Children Feasted, the Father Sacrificed: If the Feast be greater the danger is greater, and so the consideration should be more diligent: Should a Man mind nothing at Feasts but Mirth & Meat? sure, a mans Bread there should be the Bread of carefulness, not as it is

with

with covetous men out of worldlineſs, *Pſal.*127.2. but (as it is with wary and godly men) out of watchfulneſs; for it is a Sin, and a Brand lying on ſenſual men, *to feed without fear, Jude v.* 12.

This conſideration ſhould be of *what is before us*, that ſo we may not give our ſelves liberty to take of every thing, but make our choice, and take that which is offered to us, or which is fit for us, in ſuch a meaſure as is fit, with reſpect to Religion, which requires we ſhould eat and drink to the glory of God, 1 *Cor.*10. 31. and to the health of our bodies, not eating or drinking that which will diſtemper us; and to civility and modeſty that we may not reach after any thing otherwiſe than becomes us, to pleaſe our palate; yea, to our credit and reputation, that we may not ſo enlarge our ſelves by too free a uſe of the Creatures, as to fall into babling, unwiſe diſcoveries of our ſelves, or any indecent carriage. Laſtly, we ſhould ſo look to that which is ſet before us, as to look to our ſelves, and ſee we do not ſo over-charge our hearts with many things, or with any thing, as to fall into ſecurity and a mindleſneſs of that laſt and great day,

Luke 21. 34. *Matth.* 24. 48, 49.

2. The second Rule in sitting a Feasts (especially greater Feasts) is t study mortification; for that which i within makes us err in that which i James 4.1 without. This Mortification is to b exercised in two Things, *viz.* in rulin our natural appetite, *v.* 2. and inord nate desires, *v.* 3.

1. Our Appetite] else, a Rule Feasts, and an unruly appetite both, wi make bad work.

This is something strangely expresse *Put a Knife to thy Throat, if thou be Man* (not only to whom an appetite given, but) *given to appetite*, as *Psal.* 5 19. To put *a Knife to the Throat*, is put a force upon a mans self to forbe and not to devour greedily what his a petite desires: It may be best expres (as I conceive) by our Saviours sayin *Pluck out thy right eye; cut off thy ri hand, Mat.* 5.29,30. Not only the Kin dom of Heaven, but the Kingdom Hell, and the work of Satan within (1 *John* 3. 8.) should suffer violenc I say, *within us*; for Christ's meaning not that we should offer violence to a natural part or member of our bodi

(th

(that were murther, and against the sixth Commandment) but his purpose is to shew that that vitiousness and sinfulness should be removed, whereof the several parts of the Body are the Instruments. Be very choice of the natural eye, but pluck out the lustful eye; of the natural hand, but cut off the injurious or furious hand, (*1 Sam.* 24.13.) so, preserve the throat; for that [*via vitæ*] preserves thy life; but cut the throat of thy concupiscence and sensuality, cut the throat of *the old man*; Let nothing go down thy throat that conscience cannot, or should not concoct and digest: Suffer not thy throat to be an open Sepulcher, and like the Grave that is never fill'd, *Prov.* 30. 16. In sum, constrain thy self to continency, and impose upon thy self a moderation in the use of creature-comforts, namely, of Meats and Drinks, whereof we have two rare Examples.

1. Of *David*, that absolutely refused to drink the Waters of *Bethlehem*, which he so exceedingly desired, 2 *Sam.* 23. 16, 17.

2. Of *Daniel*, who would not let any portion of the Kings Meat or Wine

go down his throat, as conceiving a de filement in it, *Dan.* 1. 8.

Mortification is ſeen in reſtraining,

2. Our inordinate Deſires], *Be no deſirous of his Dainties:* Not but that a man may come to a Feaſt (where dainties are) if he be deſired, but he muſt not come (I do not ſay abſolutely, *With* but) *out of* a deſire of Dainties, but upon a clear call, and for better ends and reaſons; as *Prov.* 18. 24.

Unto this, the words following do powerfully perſwade; *for they are a deceitful Meat.* This may be underſtood of *the thing*, that is, of dainty Meats and Drinks, whereby we are ſoon deceived and beguiled of our temperance, according to that other *Proverb*, *chap.* 20. 1. *Wine is a mocker, ſtrong Drink is raging; and whoſoever is deceived thereby* (as many are) *is not wiſe:* But it ſeems to be refer'd more properly *to the Perſon*, that is, to the Perſon inviting, and with whom the Gueſt ſits; for it is not ſaid, Be not deſirous of Dainties, but of *his* Dainties. The like whereunto is ſpoken afterwards (*v.* 6, 7.) of the Niggards Feaſt; for there is a deceit alſo in his Meats, that is in *Him*, there being

one

one thing in his mouth, and another thing in his mind; Experience ſhews that Feaſts have been oft made Trains and Traps to draw and enſnare men in, *Rom.* 11. 9. When *Abſolom* means to make an end of *Amnon*, he makes him a Feaſt, 2 *Sam.* 13. 27, 28.

It's no wonder if great Politicians *ſpeak lies at one Table*, *Dan.* 11. 27. ſpeak fair one to another when they be feaſting together, the better to accompliſh their miſchievous Deſigns; yea, inferior Perſons, Worldlings and Churles will ſometimes invite others, and make them eat and drink to get a good Bargain, and make a prey of them; by which means a man that loves Dainties, and conſiders not that they are Baits, is caught before he is aware; and when he ſees he is in the Snare, he's ready to vomit his ſweet Morſels, and is deeply diſpleaſed with himſelf that when he thought he received a kindneſs, and many ſweet words were exchang'd, even then he was doing himſelf a miſchief. Yea, How many crafty Fellows, get ſimple men to the Alehouſe and beſtow drink on them, that they may the better cozen them, & when they be in their drink, get any thing of them? Now

Now all this ariseth from *desire of Dainties*, and taking pleasure in these ensnaring things. The Birds feeding from Bush to Bush, is harder than at a Pit-fall, but it is not so deceitful. If thy Provision at home or in a meaner place, be slenderer, yet Remember, it's safer.

Prov. 23. 4, 5.

Labour not to be Rich; cease from thy own Wisdom.

Ver. 5. *Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for Riches certainly make themselves wings, they flie away as an Eagle towards Heaven.*

Qu. VVHat *Counsel doth* Solomon *give for the Restraint of worldly Lusts?*

Answ. His Counsel is sum'd up in this, *Labour not to be Rich:* But more particularly, there are in that which *Solomon* saith here, three Things held forth, *viz.*

1. An Errour.

2. The

2. The Root of that Errour.
3. The Remedy and Way to get out of it.

Firſt, An Errour, to wit, labouring to be Rich], wherein it is ſuppoſed that ſeeking of riches is laborious; worldlineſs is cumberſom: Men ſay, Religion is a hard Trade, and though they drudg all the week, yet that which troubles them, is the Lords day labour; Yea, to tie and confine a mans ſelf to a converſing with God in religious Exerciſes all that day, is (with ſome) to uſe himſelf worſe than he would uſe his Horſe; which is not only a childiſh thing, (for juſt ſo Children are aggriev'd that they are kept to School, they had rather go to plow) but an injurious ſlander put upon Religion: for, Is not Chriſts yoke eaſie, and his burthen light? Are not all the paths of Wiſdom, paths of pleaſantneſs? *Prov.* 3. 17. *Mammon* is the hard Maſter not Chriſt, and the [*improbus labor*] importunate labour, and moſt burthenſome; yea, and moſt dangerous drudgery is in the inordinate purſuit of theſe earthly things, *Eccleſ.* 5. 17.

I say, such a labouring as this, is supposed; But that which these words evidently import and mind us of, is, that there is an errour in this; for *Solomon* saith, *Labour not*, and so doth Christ, *John 6. 27.* Not but that a man may labour in his Calling to encrease his State: But here are two Things,

1. The Action, *Labour.*

2. The End, *to be Rich:* Now, there's an Errour in both these.

1. In the Labour when it is excessive; that is, when there is,

1. Such a labour of the heart, as that the whole stream of a mans affections runs world-ward, and that so violently as that he will have no Nay; he *will be rich*, 1 *Tim. 6. 9.* or else he will be sick and die, 1 *Kings* 21. 4. 1 *Sam.* 25.37.

2. Such a labour of the head, as that a man is ever plotting and plodding about the world, *Psal.* 49. 11. *Luke* 12. 17, 22. even when he should hear a Sermon, *Luk.* 14. 18. yea, when he doth hear it, *Ezek.* 33. 31. *Luke* 12. 13, 15.

3. And such a labour of the hand and body, as that a man can neither eat his meat nor sleep with quietness, *Eccles.* 4. 8. & 5. 12, 17. --- *Psal.* 127. 2.

2.

2. In regard of the End] when a man makes it his ultimate end, and chief aim to be rich, This cannot be good; for Wiſdom muſt be the *principal thing*, *Prov.* 4. 7. And our labour ſhould be,

1. In obedience to Wiſdom requiring us to be diligent in our Calling, *Prov.* 27. 23.

2. For the aſſiſting and adorning of Wiſdom; becauſe *Wiſdom is good* (that is, ſhews it ſelf to be good) *with an inheritance*, *Eccleſ.* 7. 11. & 9. 16. for thereby a Man is enabled to put forth his Wiſdom in the doing of good, as *David* and *Solomon* did in preparing for, and building the Temple, 1 *Chron.* 29. 2, 3. & 28. 20, 21.

Secondly, Here is laid down the root of this Errour], to wit, an Errour in judgment, which is this, that the Wealthieſt man is the happieſt man; and therefore he is the wiſeſt man that beſtows his labour, ſo as to get the beſt outward eſtate about him; And ſo indeed, worldly men judg, (*Pſal.* 10. 3. & 49. 18.) though God ſay, *Thou fool*, *Luke* 12. 20. and both Scripture and Reaſon refute that Errour.

For, 1. The Wealth of the world helps not to peace, but pierceth, *Job* 20. 22. *Mat.* 27. 3. 1 *Tim.* 6. 10. Nor,

Nor 2. To life, but drowneth Men in perdition and deſtruction, *Luke* 12. 15. 1 *Tim.* 6. 9. This errour in judgment *Moſes* was moſt clear from, and carried himſelf accordingly, *Heb.* 11. 25, 26. and all Men ſhould ceaſe from; *Ceaſe from thine own Wiſdom*; It's a wiſdom of our own, deſcends not from above, but is earthly, *Jam.* 3. 16. Gods Wiſdom ſays, *This their way is their folly*, *Pſal.* 49. 13. And what's our wiſdom to Gods? when *every one is bruitiſh in his own knowledg*, Jer. 10. 14.

Thirdly, There is added, *v.* 5. the remedy of this Errour, which is to underſtand well, and conſider of the Vanity of Riches, *viz.*

1. The Vanity and littleneſs of them. Carthwr. *They are not.* There's no ſuch Excellency in them, they are *the leaſt things*, *Luke* 16. 10. Nay, there is (as it were) no entity in them; they are in a day of extremity like *Job*'s Friends, then they are *Nothing*, *Job* 6. 21, clear contrary to the judgment of the world, that ſays a rich Man is a ſubſtantial Man, as if other Men were but Accidents; when it is not the Rich but the Righteous that is more excellent than his Neighbour,

Prov.

Prov. 12. 26. and *the holy Seed* (whether rich or poor) is the *substance*, and subsistence both of the Church and the World, *Isa.* 6. 13. *Mat.* 24. 22. O why wilt thou *set thine eyes*, or let thine eyes *flie* (as it is in the Original,) upon this Nothing? And it's rightly said *thine eyes*; for the World is mostly in a worldlings eye, and all the good he hath from his Goods, is the *beholding of them with his eyes*, *Eccles.* 5. 11. either his eye is after the World that he may have it, or on the World when he hath it; he loves to contemplate it, and rowl his eye upon it; and that's his Reward.

2. The Vanity and Instability of them]; for *Riches certainly* (if the true God may be believed) *make themselves wings*; which is true two ways:

1. Because they be things *of themselves*, corruptible by rust, moth, *&c. Mat.* 6. 19.

2. Because they be things corrupting with pride and working to oppression, *Psal.* 73. 6, 8. *Obad. v.* 3. and so they may be said to enforce God to take them away. Experience hath still confirm'd the uncertainty and volubility of these earthly

earthly Riches, especially ill-gotten, as they use to be when the eye flies very swiftly after them, *Prov.* 28.20. The Father oppresseth, deceiveth, encroacheth, and so leaves a great State to the Son; so the *Eagle* is a great Bird, but hath wings, such are Riches ill-gotten: The Father, by his unjust courses help'd them to wings, and then, the dissolute Son lets them flie (as an Hawk) and makes himself merry with the Flight: But they flie also *as an Eagle*, high, and cannot be taken; swiftly, and cannot be over-taken, and that *towards Heaven*; for God takes them away: Hell gathers them, and Heaven scatters them. But howsoever gotten, ill, or well, they are but earthly Treasures, *Mat.* 6. 19. and so, subject to many casualties and ways (like wings) of divers sorts that may carry them away from us. Now what wise Man (that hath eyes in his head) would let his Heart lie, and let his Eye flie upon such flying things?

Prov.

Prov. 25. 8, 9, 10.

Ver. 8. *Go not forth haſtily to ſtrive, leſt thou know not what to do in the end thereof when thy Neighbour hath put thee to ſhame.*

Ver. 9. *Debate thy cauſe with thy Neighbour thy ſelf, and diſcover not a ſecret to another.*

Ver. 10. *Leſt he that heareth it put thee to ſhame, and thine infamy turn not away.*

Qu. *What's* Solomon's *Advice concerning the Vice of Strife and Contention?*

Anſw. Solomon here adviſeth two Things.

1. Not to be haſty in ſtriving.
2. To be careful of debating as a ſpecial Remedy againſt that ſtriving.

Firſt, Not to be haſty in ſtriving]; *Go not forth haſtily to ſtrive*] as Men that have a mind to it, who haſten to what they long after. They that haſte moſt

uſe to do worſt and ſpeed worſt; for in all things agreeable to corrupt nature, nature ſpeaks firſt and worſt: And though right Reaſon, and eſpecially ſanctified Reaſon and Grace, may afterward ſpeak better things; yet a former ingagement is a great detainment from obeying later and better thoughts; for ſuch is the pride of ſinful Man, that he will rather adventure upon the danger of proſecuting a worſe way, than incur the diſhonour of changing, though it be for a better; when he hath once *gone forth haſtily*, he's very loth to make a a retreat, though *back again be the better way.*

For help in this Caſe; a Man that is about to go out in a ſtriving way, ſhall do well to entertain a four-fold Conſideration.

1. In point of Juſtice, whether the Cauſe be right, elſe that general Rule, *Mat.* 7. 12, forbids contending for Victory in it.

2. In point of Religion, whether it be of moment, elſe there ſhould be rather a taking of Wrong than a raiſing of trouble about a trifle, 1 *Cor.* 6. 7.

Yea, and in point of Reaſon this is to be

be conſidered alſo, that more may be ſpent in time and charge than the matter is worth.

3. In point of Charity, whether an offer of peace and friendly agreement have been made, *Heb.* 12. 14. *Deut.* 20. 10. for it is not meet to deal as *delighting in War*, *Pſal.* 68. 30.

4. In point of Providence, whether there be a probability of prevailing, (the cauſe being good, and a good cauſe being like to find favour) elſe better forbear, and (foreſeeing an ill Succeſs) prevent Strife by patience, than end it with ſhame. Know well what thou do'ſt at firſt, leſt (as *Solomon* here ſaith) *thou know not what to do at laſt.*

. *Secondly*, *Solomon* adviſeth to *debate the cauſe*, where three Things are intimated:

1. That it's good to end Differences.
2. By what Courſe.
3. With what Caution.

1. It's good to end things privately]. If there be a Strife, yet *Go not forth*, Go not far, not to the Court, to the Bench; rather Go in, than go forth, that is into thy Neighbours houſe, or into a Neighbours houſe; that's likeſt to put an end

to Strife, and prevent that expence of time and money, yea, of love and charity also which every Law-suit carries with it; yea, more evil than men given to strife are aware of: For Law-ing is like Building, that will cost twice so much as a man thinks of before-hand.

2. The course is *Debating*; That's the best Composer of Controversies; for, They commonly arise (at least, rise to get higher) not so much out of a desire to try what's right and obtain what's just (in which debating and the opening of all things as indeed they are, is very helpful); As from,

1. Misprision; Now a patient and unpartial debate, discovers and removes all mistakes.

Or, 2. From Passion; and Debating (especially neighbourly and with offended neighbours themselves) calls up Reason to judg of the Controversie and cries down Passion.

3. The Caution is, Debate with him *himself*; without necessity, Go not further, *Mat.* 18. 15. For Contention gone forth, is like water broken out, *Prov.* 17. 14. the further it runs, the deeper and fiercer it is to go further from an end;

peace

peace is ſooneſt made when feweſt meddle, *Fermin.*

But in ſpecial, the warning is, *Diſcover not a ſecret to another, Prov.* 17. 9. If haply (thy Neighbour and thou not agreeing between your ſelves) the matter be propounded to another that will be indifferent to both, then keep cloſe to the matter, if any thing (not honourable to thy Neighbour) hath paſs'd ſecretly between thee and him when you ſtood upon good terms; or if there have been ſome worſe and more paſſionate paſſages in the heat of Contention, which touch not the cauſe, and no man knows but thou and he, diſcover not any ſuch ſecrets (that are beſides the buſineſs) to a third perſon, to ingratiate thy ſelf and cauſe, to make him the more on thy ſide, by making thy Neighbour vile; for ſuch blabbing, ſuch unfaithfulneſs, enmity, and inhumanity, will *put* (not thy Neighbour, but) *thee to ſhame* before a good-natur'd Perſon (whether an Arbitrator or an Auditor only); And whereas by ſuch an one, thy Neighbour's infirmity will be buried and kept ſecret, he will blame and ſhame thee for want of ſecrecy; and that in-

ſamy of thine for ſuch malice and treachery, *ſhall not turn away.*

O How many when they be at a Debate, that ſhould and might reconcile them (being drunk with anger and ſpleen) vomit up all, diſcover all nakedneſs, ſtriving ſo far to ſhame every Man his Adverſary, as that they ſhame themſelves eternally!

Prov. 28. 14.

Happy is the Man that feareth alway.

Qu. *WHat is there in Fear that a Man for that ſhould be counted Happy?*

Anſw. Fear is of divers Sorts, *viz.*

1. Natural], ariſing from the Principles of created (not corrupted) nature; and therefore, not bad nor good, morally; as to fear Fire, Water, a Drawn-Sword: This is in Beaſts (uncapable of Reaſon, and therefore of ſin) as well as Men; in good Men as well as in bad; yea, in Chriſt himſelf, *Heb.* 5. 7. who

who feared that which (looking to humane infirmity) might have overwhelmed him for ever; therefore fearing, he prayed, *O let this Cup paſs, or let it not prevail to ſwallow me up.* Others, out of this fear, avoid the evil feared, by diſcretion; God's Children, by Religion; others, when they cannot by prudence prevent and avoid ſuch evils, ſeek by fortitude to bear them; but Gods Children ſtrive by grace and heavenly conſolation to prevent or to endure them, *Rev.* 2. 10. as *David* (we may ſay, as *Chriſt*) who, fearing ſets the Lord before him, and ſo concludes, that becauſe He is at his right hand, he ſhall not be overwhelmed, but raiſed, *Pſal.* 16. 8, 9, 10, *&c.* & *Pſal.* 56. 3.

2. Corrupt or Criminal], or penal; for Fear inordinate is,

1. A Sin], becauſe it is accompanied with diſtruſt of Gods goodneſs, deſpair of his mercy, and makes Men to flie from him as an Enemy, *Gen.* 3. 10. *Iſa.* 2. 10. yea, to fight againſt him, 1 *Sam.* 4. 7, 9.

2. A Puniſhment], and a miſerable one too, *Deut.* 28. 65, 66, 67. *Iſa.* 33. 14. *Jer.* 20. 3. a puniſhment fit for Devils,

who believe and tremble, and like to Hell; for Fear hath torment, from which Gods Children are delivered in part here, and shall be perfectly hereafter, *Psal.* 112. 7. *Prov.* 28. 1. *Jer.* 17. 18. *Heb.* 2. 15.

3. Spiritual], becauſe wrought by the Spirit, which is *the Spirit of the Fear of the Lord*, *Iſa.* 11. 2. Or *Filial* (becauſe in the Sons of God, in them only, and well-becoming them) whereby the Children of God, conſidering Gods Majeſty, Mercy, Juſtice, *&c.* and their own ſin and unworthineſs, fear before him, *Mal.* 2. 5. This Fear hath a Threefold Object, *viz.*

1. God] to be feared.

1. As the great King, for his incomparable excellency and eminency. *Jer.* 10. 7, 8, *&c.* *Dan.* 5. 19. *Rev.* 1. 17.

2. As a Father, for his Mercy and Goodneſs, *Mal.* 1. 6. *Pſal.* 130. 4. *Hoſ.* 3. 5. and therefore to be obeyed, 1 *Pet.* 1. 14.

3. As a Judg that will and muſt meet with Rebels; and therefore is not to be provoked; See 1 *Pet.* 1. 17. 2 *Cor.* 5. 10, 11.

2. Sin] that it may not be committed;

See

See *Gen.*20.11. *Numb.*12.8. *Eſth.*7.5. yea, that Duty may not be un-performed, nor ill performed, but ſin of omiſſion avoided, *Exod.* 5.3. *Mal.*1.14. Hence it followeth, that ſince I am to be afraid of Sin, I muſt be afraid of my Self in whom there is ſuch a root of corruption, *Deut.*11.16. *Luke* 21.34. *Deut.* 29.18. and of Satan, the Prince, (*Epheſ.* 2.2.) and of wicked men, the Inſtruments of tentation, 1 *Cor.* 10.12. *Prov.* 5.8.

3. The puniſhment of Sin] to be feared ſo, that it may not be procured, as *Job* did, *Job* 31.3,23.

Now, It's true, that wicked men Fear, but it is out of an evil conſcience, not fearing ſo as to prevent the evil feared (there was never any in Hell that ſo feared it as to uſe all means to prevent coming to it) but ſo, as that the thing they fear comes upon them, for want of taking a due courſe to free themſelves from it, as the Thief fears the Halter, and yet procures it; but Gods Children fear to bring by their Sin ſad things on themſelves; and therefore ſo fear in the time of their proſperity as to prevent adverſity; as *Exod.* 9.20.

Queſt.

Queſt. *But how is it poſſible that Fear ſhould have ſuch an hand in Man's Happineſs?*

Anſw. Becauſe though Fear be found in all as the ſame created affection, yet it is not of the ſame effect; Fear in the godly is a defence from evil, *Prov.* 14.16. & 16.8. in the wicked, it is a taſte of Hell; it betrays, or at leaſt over-looks the ſuccours that reaſon affords, much more the helps that grace offers; and ſometimes, inſtead of laying hold on the Promiſes, lays hold on an Halter (as *Judas*) or invites another to take away their life. Yea, *Saul* takes a Sword and falls upon it himſelf for fear leſt the uncircumciſed *Philiſtims* ſhould come and thruſt him through, 1 *Sam.* 31.4.

An holy Fear is of another nature, and hath theſe Commodities and Happineſſes in it.

1. It is a good Counſeller]; Fear occaſioneth counſel, and counſel ſafety, *Prov.* 3.7. Holy Fear ſaith, How ſhall I with my ten thouſand look the Lord in the face that comes againſt me with his

his twenty thouſand? Hereupon he that feareth God, having (by the help of his fear) thus conſulted, ſeeketh peace by Jeſus Chriſt; So *Jehoſaphat*'s fear ſuggeſted a wiſe courſe for his welfare here, 2 *Chron.* 20. 3.

2. It is a good Watch]. As a fearful Dog is againſt Thieves. It's the fearful, that is the moſt careful Servant night and day: Fear gives warning, and ſo we betake our ſelves to our Hold, *Gen.* 32. 9, 10. *Pſal.* 40. 3. See Prov. 3. 29.

3. It's a good fortifier]. It makes Gods Children do as they that confine on the Sea, or on an Enemy's-Country, where the greateſt fortifications are, and every thing looked to whereat an Entry might be made; ſo Men fearing God look to every thing, as the mouth, *Pſal.* 39. 1. the eye, *Job* 31. 1. the hand, 1 *Sam.* 24. 13. even as *Noah* feared and made an Ark, *Heb.* 11. 7.

4. It's a good Monitor] or *Maſter of Ceremonies*, minding us of our duty and diſtance: As it is ſaid, ſerve the Lord without fear, that is, diſtruſtful fear, (if you have that you be too far off); ſo it is ſaid alſo, *Serve the Lord with fear*, *Pſal.* 2. 11. for we muſt not be too bold, *Pſal.* 89. 7.

Fear

Fear therefore muſt be ſtill with us; we muſt be in it all the day, *Prov.* 23. 17. and yet Faith and Fear are, and ought to be joined together, that as we ought not to be too bold, ſo we may not be baſe, *Pſal.* 56. 3. & 147. 11.

5. It's a Life-prolonger], and that with peace and happineſs, *Prov.* 19. 23. & 22. 4. *Eccleſ.* 8. 12, 13.

Prov. 28. 14. Latter part.

---But he that hardeneth his heart ſhall fall into miſchief.

Qu. *WHat hardneſs of heart is that whereby a Man falls into miſchief?*

Anſw. In general: All that wilful hardening of a Mans heart which is againſt the fear of God mentioned in the former part of the Verſe, upon the want whereof all ſin and judgment is bottomed, *Mal.* 1.5. For as the fear of God is the beginning of wiſdom and welfare; ſo a fearleſs and daring heart is the begin-

ginning of all folly and miſery, *Prov.* 14. 16.

Particularly, There is a miſchievous hardneſs of heart:

1. Againſt the Commandment of God, which every wiſe man fears, *Prov.* 13. 13. and they that are appointed to miſchief and deſtruction deſpiſe, *Jer.* 44. 16, 17.

2. Againſt the reproofs, admonitions and warnings of the Word: By this it appeared that God was determined to deſtroy *Amaziah*, 2 *Chron.* 25. 16. See for this, 2 *Chron.* 36. 12, 14, 15, 16, 17. *Iſa.* 48. 4. *Jer.* 44. 4, 5, 10. *Ezek.* 3. 7. *Zech.* 7. 11, 12, 13. In ſpecial, *Prov.* 29. 1.

3. Againſt the threatnings of God, and thoſe judgments that wiſe Men ſee are coming on apace, *Nehem.* 9. 29, 30. *Iſa.* 5. 19. *Jer.* 5. 12. *Prov.* 22. 3.

4. Againſt the judgments of God already executed, *Jer.* 5. 3. *Zeph.* 3. 7. *Amos* 4. 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

5. Againſt the mercies, merciful offers, promiſes and providences of God, *Iſa.* 7. 11, 12, 13, 17. *Amos* 2. 9, 14. *Rom.* 2. 4, 5.

6. Againſt the gracious Works of God:

God: O how grievous was their hardneſs of heart that could not abide that Chriſt (of whoſe power and doing good every where, they were convinced) ſhould ſpeak a word *to reſtore a withered hand* on the Sabbath day, when themſelves would not loſe or be loſers in, an Ox or an Aſs for want of looking on them on that day! *Mark* 3. 5. with *Mat.* 12. 11, 12, 13.

7. Againſt the holy ways of God, *Mal.* 3. 13, &c.

But yet this hardneſs of heart may further and more diſtinctly be known by the words uſed to expreſs it:

Namely, It is expreſſed,

1. By a word ſignifying hardneſs ariſing from drineſs *; So, a Perſon hard-hearted is one that wants the moiſture of grace, whereby he receives heavenly things as a ſtone, which is wet for preſent, but dry preſently, having not (as the Earth hath) any moiſture in it ſelf.

* Σκλη-ρότης. Rom. 2. 5.

2. By a Word ſignifying that which is hard by Cuſtom *, through calloſity, brawneſs and often beating upon it, as the High-way by often treading on it. And (indeed) the hard heart is the Devils

* πωρω-σις. Eph. 4. 18.

vils Cauſey-way, and Sin is the Devils Foot whereby he treads on it, and makes it hard, *Heb.* 3. 13. *Jer.* 13. 23. And whereby it is fitted for the Wrath of God, which (like the thunder-bolt) ſpares that which is ſoft, and rends that which is hard, 2 *Kings* 17. 19.

Now, that it may appear that every Man falls thus into miſchief by his own fault, it is ſaid, *He that hardeneth his heart*]; For whoſe heart is hardened, it is his own fault: It's *thy hardneſs*, *Rom.* 2. 5. It's of mens own making; for it is ſaid, *They made their hearts as an Adamant-ſtone*, *Zech.* 7. 12.

For though God be ſaid to harden, yet he hardens not properly, poſitively, efficiently, cauſally; (that's the cauſe which produceth the effect out of its proper virtue); Let no man ſay when he is hardened, I am hardened of God, (as *Jam.* 1. 13.) for He infuſeth not hardneſs, He makes not that heart hard that was ſoft before, but leaves men in and to their own hearts; the conſequent whereof becauſe it is hardneſs, therefore God is ſaid to harden. Thus he may be ſaid to harden, though not efficiently; yet conſequentially by dereliction, and with-

with-holding that ſoftening grace which He is not bound to give; yea, judicially He hardens by Tradition, giving up by his juſt judgment, hard-hearted, impenitent and obſtinate men to the power of Satan, that by him they may be hardened. 2 *Theſ.* 2. 10, 11, 12.

Thus for Wicked Men.

God is ſaid alſo to harden his Children, *Iſa.* 63. 17. but that is only becauſe for a time, he giveth not out unto them that accuſtomed influence of his grace which they have formerly felt, and ſo they be like the Earth which though there be moiſture in it, yet, if for a longer time it want the dew of Heaven, it grows dry and hard. This is not a wilful hardening in them, but a woful hardening to them; whereof therefore they complain to God, yea, and both humbly and faithfully plead and expoſtulate with him, in regard of the promiſe of a ſoft heart they have from him, *Deut.* 30. 6. *Ezek.* 36. 26.

Notwithſtanding which, God ſometimes leaves them dry and hard; Namely, for two Reaſons.

1. For ſome fore-going Sin]. *David* was

was ſo hard of heart, that he apprehended not what *Nathan* intended till he ſaid, *Thou art the Man*, 2 *Sam.* 12. 7. This came of his Adultery, Murder, Diſſimulation.

2. For a trial and diſcovery of Humane Infirmity] when a man thinks highly of himſelf, or the Church of him, as in the Caſe of *Hezekiah*, 2 *Chron.* 32. 31.

O let us take heed of the deceitfulneſs of Sin, (*Heb.* 3. 13.) of going a little, and a little further; That hardens. A wiſe man ſays not, I never eat Flints or Mil-ſtones, therefore I ſhall never have *The Stone*; but purgeth humours and crudities from the Stomack, becauſe they (being impacted) will breed the Stone; ſo a wiſe Chriſtian is wary and provident to prevent and remove every corrupt thing, which by pleaſing and polluting the heart for the preſent, hath a tendency in it, to the hardening of it.

But the Man here ſpoken of, that is devoid of the Fear of God, is careleſs, m[illegible]dleſs of the miſery and miſchief of an hard heart; and therefore walks in thoſe ways merrily, that makes his heart

like the High-way; yea, rather than fail, he will make that Mercy of God that ſhould *lead him to repentance*, *Rom.* 2. 5. an help to his hardening; for he ſays God likes my courſes well enough (when he proſpers) *Pſal.* 50. 21. And (however) thinks with himſelf, God will be merciful at laſt (albeit God profeſs he will not, *Deut.* 29. 19, 20.) yea, though Mercy and hardneſs of Heart be oppoſed the one to the other; God is ſaid, *Rom.* 9. 18. *to have mercy on whom he will, and whom he will he hardens*; that is, taketh not away that hardneſs of heart which they have of themſelves, but giveth them up to it; ſo that, if hardening, no Mercy; What then? Why, Wrath by heap, if that hardneſs of heart be continued in, and inſtead of Mercy, everlaſting Miſchief, *Rom.* 2. 4, 5, 6.

Scripture-

Scripture-Queſtions out of *Eccleſiaſtes.*

Eccleſ. 1. 2.

Vanity of Vanities (ſaith the Preacher) Vanity of Vanities, all is Vanity.

Qu. WHat doth this whole Book hold forth to us concerning this Vanity?

Anſw. It ſetteth forth this, that all is Vanity, ſave only the Fear of God and keeping his Commandments. In ſum, *Out of God, all things are Vanity.*

Now there is a Vanity *of Sin, for Sin, and by Sin.*

Firſt, Of Sin]; for Sin it ſelf is Vanity, as Idolatry, Oppreſſion, and an evil and unjuſtifiable courſe of life. See *Jer.* 14. 22. *Rom.* 1. 21, 22, 23. *Pſal.*

62. 10. *Prov.* 13. 11. *Isa.* 5. 18.

1. Sin is Vanity in three Respects.

1. Because in its Nature, it is a Nothing, a Privation (ἀνομία) a defect, no positive thing, no substance; for God made Substances, and all he made was good; but Sin is (*figmentum Cordis nostri*, *Gen.* 6. 5.) an imagination and device of our own, *Eccles.* 7.29.

2. Because it deceives the Sinners expectation, giving him, instead of satisfaction looked for, (2 *Sam.* 13. 15, 29.) bitterness, either in repentance, or in damnation, *Prov.* 11. 4. *Jer.* 2. 19. *Rom.* 6. 21.

3. Because it makes the Sinner himself become vain or a Vanity. If Idols be Vanity, the Idolatry is so too; for He is *like them*, *Psal.* 115. 8. And therefore Man is mortal and vanisheth away, because he is sinful; yea, Man in his best estate, since Sin came into the world, is altogether Vanity, *Psal.* 39. 5. What a poor vain thing is the Prince of Devils by reason of Sin? *Beel-zebub* the god of Flies, the great *Humble-Bee*, and all other Devils under him, little Bees or Flies.

Secondly,

Secondly, *For Sin*], This Vanity is found in the Creatures that be not ſinful, they being appointed for Mans content, profit, honour, but are abuſed by ſinful men to covetouſneſs, intemperance, vain-glory --- and ſo become *Vanity*.

This Vanity of the Creatures appears in Four Things:

1. IN that the Curſe of God is on them; *I went by and curſed his habitation* (ſaith *Job*), to wit, for the dwellers ſake; ſo the Earth is curſed for Mans ſake: yea, the Air is poiſoned by the Conſtellations of Heaven, and *the Stars in their courſes fight againſt* Siſera, *Judges* 5.20. A Curſe is on the Heavens in a ſort for Mans Sin.

2. IN that they be in Bondage, *Rom.* 8.20, 21. and in a groaning condition, *v.* 22. for as it is a great trouble to loyal Subjects to be inforced to ſerve Rebels and Enemies to their Sovereign; ſo it is to the Creatures to feed and cloth and cheriſh wicked Men; yea, not only ſerving Man a Sinner, but Man in ſinning, *Numb.* 22. 30. 32. Things made for natural neceſſities, are abuſed to carnal exceſſes; from this they deſire to be free.

3. IN that they fail Men in their ends, not for which God hath appointed them, but which they (without God) ſet to them. They look they ſhould ſecure them in the day of trouble, *Prov.* 18. 11. but that they ſhall not, *Prov.* 11. 4. and for full ſatisfaction from them; whereas the Creatures ſhould not have ſatisfied *Adam* in innocency, Man being a Creature not ſatisfiable with any thing but that which is heavenly, and he being to be tranſlated for his ſatisfaction.

4. IN that they tend to diſſolution: For 1. They periſh in the uſing, *Coloſ.* 2. 22. eat meat and it's gone, no more meat can be made of that which is eaten, Ground arable wears in the uſing.

2. At length they come to utter conſumption, 1 *Cor.* 6. 13. 2 *Pet.* 3. 12. Things muſt go at the Kings price; Put the Kings price on theſe things, weigh them in the ballance of the Sanctuary, and then call them Vanity, as the Preacher here doth.

Obj. *Preachers ſay ſo, but Do wiſe Men think ſo?*

Anſw.

Answ. Solomon was not only a Preacher, but a *King in Jerusalem*, *ver.* 1. yea, the wisest King that ever was, 1 *Kings* 3.12. yet he says so, *ver.* 2. Redeem thy self from Vanity by doing the will of God, 1 *John* 2. 17. and the Creatures by imploying them to good and holy uses, *Luke* 16. 9.

But (instead of this) there is Vanity.

Thirdly, By Sin], that is, unwise man adds to the Creatures Vanity, and moreover, to his own vexation, by his continual miscarriages about the Creatures:

Namely, 1. IN excessive toiling and moiling about them (as many have done about the Philosophers Stone, that turns (as they say) all to Gold) to get that supposed good and happiness which it is not in them to give, And is not that a Vanity to labour extreamly to get that which can never can be had?

2. IN being over-solicitous for keeping that, the loss whereof cannot make them miserable, nor the holding of it, happy; Is not this a vexing Vanity?

3. IN regard of the use of the Creature, either in excess by voluptuousness,

or in defect, by miſerableneſs; And is not this a monſtrous Vanity?

4. IN regard of mens own End; for after all the imployment of Wit, ſtrength, ſtate and time, about theſe earthly things, there is [then, that is, at death] no difference (in regard of theſe externals) between Wiſe Men and Fools, between Rich Men and Beggars; yea, between Men and Beaſts, *Job* 13.28.

5. IN regard of the leaving of all after their end; for *Who ſhall bring a Man to ſee what ſhall be after him? Eccleſ.*3.22. He that hath heapt up never ſo much, knows not to whom he ſhall leave it, whether to a Friend and Relation, or to a Stranger; whether to a Wiſe Man or a Fool: To be ſure, the hard labour is his, but what he hath got by it, may fall into the hands of a Drone or diſſolute Spend-thrift. Now for a Man to labour exceſſively to maintain anothers idleneſs, and to pinch himſelf ſordidly to maintain anothers prodigality, hath much of Sin in it, and of Vanity by Sin.

Eccleſ. 7. 10.

Say not thou, What is the cauſe that the former days were little better than theſe? for thou doſt not enquire wiſely concerning this.

Qu. DOth Solomon *abſolutely bind us out from ſaying*, the former days are better than theſe, *or from queſtioning the preſent times?*

Anſw. 1. He ſaith, and the Spirit of God ſaith, *Say not*], ſay not thou, *What is the cauſe?* for it is the manner of impatience to be asking Queſtions *, as if no good anſwer could be given; but the anſwer of the Preacher is to forbid them to ask, becauſe it is but a fooliſh Queſtion. Job 3. 11, 12. Gen. 43. 6. *Jer. in loc.*

For 2. He ſaith, that they that ſay ſo make not *a wiſe enquiry concerning this.*

But for further inſtruction and ſatisfaction, the Queſtion may be anſwered Negatively and Affirmatively.

Firſt

Firſt, Negatively, in two Things:

1. *Solomon*'s meaning is not that ſome times are not worſe than others; for Chriſts own words (if we ſpeak of affliction) ſhew the contrary, telling us of ſuch tribulation *as was not from the beginning of the world to that time, no nor ever ſhall be*, *Mat.* 24. 21. And (if we ſpeak of Sin) the deſcription of the laſt times by the Apoſtle, ſhews the contrary, 2 *Tim.* 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

2. Nor is it his meaning, that if the Times be corrupt, they ſhould not be diſliked, and the iniquity thereof reproved and cried out againſt, or the calamity thereof bewailed; for that's a Duty, *Iſa.* 58. 1. *Ezek.* 9. 4. *Jer.* 13. 17.

Secondly, Poſitively, in divers Particulars.

1. A Man muſt not complain of the Times, as looking for a felicity in this world, and to enjoy ſuch Times as will have nothing in them to complain of.

2. None ſhould quarrel with the preſent Times out of vain reſpects, out of an

an humour of worldlineſs and diſcontentedneſs, when the Times they complain of are in truth better than the Times they commend, and the Time they commend worſe than the time they condemn. Thus, the *Scribes and Phariſees* made as if their Fathers days and doings were worſe than theirs, *Mat.* 23. 30. when their Fathers kill'd the Servants of God only, but in their time, the Son of God was ſlain, and by their hands. And ſo ſome old ignorant creatures have us'd to proclaim the Times of Popery here in *England* better than the latter Times of the Goſpel, becauſe then all things were cheap; when the cauſe of their ſaying ſo, is the regarding of their Purſe or Paunch more than their Souls.

3. Neither ſhould any queſtion the times ſo as therein to queſtion the wiſdom and righteouſneſs of Gods Government, by whoſe Providence it is that ſome Times are better and ſome worſe, *Pſal.* 31. 15. *Amos* 3. 6. See *Mal.* 2. 17. & 3. 13, 14. *Job* 1. 22. & 24. 1. & 34. 29.

4. Neither ſhouldſt thou, if the Times be ſadder, and the days wherein thou liveſt be gloomy days, torment thy

thy self with excessive grief, or pine away with sorrow, *Josh.* 7. 7, 10. *Acts* 27. 22. Ask not only the Times, Why are you so heavy? But thy Self, Why am I so heavy? *Psal.* 42. 11.

5. Leave not thy Station, 1 *Cor.* 7. 24. *Nehem.* 6. 11. *Amos* 7. 14, 15. neglect not thy Calling out of a despairing mind, but go on in thy way, and wait upon God in thy place in an evil world; use piety, study repentance, *Zeph.* 2. 3. Get away every *Achan*, *Josh.* 7. 11. yea, use prudence; Be silent, Take heed what thou sayst, and to whom, *Amos* 5. 13. and to whom thou committest thy self, *John* 2. 24. *Acts* 9. 26. but yet Take heed of leaving the work committed to thee to do, *Mark* 13. 34, 35. *Acts* 5. 25, 28, 29, 42. And if there should be any withdrawing for a time upon some special occasion, be able to say as *David*; Is there not a Cause? 1 *Sam.* 17. 29. Take heed of questioning the Times so as that God should question thee (though thou be hardly dealt with) for a Runaway. Remember the Angels questioning of *Hagar* flying from her Mistress, *Gen.* 16. 8, 9, with *v.* 6.

6. Do not so examine, pry into, and pore

pore upon the evils of the Times as to forget the good of the Times. Theſe laſt Times are the beſt that ever were in regard of Goſpel-manifeſtations, *Mat.* 13. 16, 17. and yet they are the worſt, to wit, in regard of the rage of Satan and wicked men, *Rev.* 2. 10. *Rev.* 12. 12. *John* 16. 2.

7. When Times be at the worſt, if thou queſtion the Cauſe, do not queſtion it with indignation (as if the world were ungoverned, or thy mind were to put in Interrogatories againſt the great Governour thereof, *Job* 34. 7, 8.) but do it for information, and then, if thou enquire wiſely, thou wilt find the cauſe of worſe Times to be the ſins of the Times, *Jer.* 30. 14, 15. *Mic.* 3. 5. Turn therefore thy queſtionings and quarellings with the Times unto an examining of, (this is a wiſe enquiry, *Mica* 6. 9, 10, *&c.*) a mourning for, and a reforming of, (as far as thy power reacheth) thoſe evils of ſin that cauſe the Times to be ſo evil, *Deut.* 31. 29.

8. Do not ſo complain of bad Times as to lay aſide all hopes of better, *Jer.* 30. 7, 17. *Jer.* 33. 23. *Pſal.* 42. 11. *Still hope in God*, *Ezra* 10. 2.

9. If

9. If there never come good Times in thy time, inſtead of froward Queries about, make a good uſe of, exerciſe ſuffering graces in, learn ſome good Leſſons from thoſe evil and caſtigatory Times (*Mica.* 6. 9.) into which it hath pleaſed God to caſt thee; *Epheſ.* 5. 16. *Thou oughteſt always ſo to live* (ſaith *Hierom in loc.*) *as that the preſent days may be better to thee than the days that are paſt*: *Pſal.* 119. 71. Hereupon, unto thy Queſtion, *What is the cauſe why the former days are better than theſe?* This Anſwer may be return'd, That thy ways may be better than if the days had been better.

Nec vetus ſæculum præſenti præferas, quia unus utriuſq; Conditor eſt Deus, Virtutes bonos dies viventi faciunt, vitia malos. Hieron. in loc.

Eccleſ

Eccleſ. 7. 16, 17.

Ver. 16. *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy ſelf overwiſe; Why ſhouldeſt thou deſtroy thy ſelf?*

Ver. 17. *Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou fooliſh; Why ſhouldeſt thou die before thy time?*

Qu. WHat's Solomon's *drift in this double counſel? Or what doth he mean by* [*overmuch righteous*] *and* [*overmuch wicked*]?

Anſw. Sure, it hath reference to his obſervation in the Verſe going before, *viz. That a juſt Man periſheth in his righteouſneſs, and a wicked Man prolongeth his life in his wickedneſs*, according to which theſe Verſes muſt be interpreted.

The Queſtion therefore may be anſwered,

1. Negatively], certainly when it is ſaid, *Be not righteous overmuch*, it is not to give a check to any ſtrictneſs which the

the Word of God requires whether in opinion or practice; for No man can be over-righteous by ſticking cloſe to the Rule of Righteouſneſs, any more than the Maſon by rearing his Wall preciſely according to his Rule and Plummet; Nay, to diminiſh from the Word, *Deut.* 4. 2. to depart from the way of the Word to the right hand or the left, is a deſtructive thing, *Deut.* 5. 32. & 6. 14, 17. *Pſal.* 125. 5.

2. Poſitively]. The former being not *Salomon*'s meaning, the Queſtion is what his purpoſe is in theſe words. There is therefore a double more probable interpretation.

The firſt reſpecteth the ſubjects or the perſons here ſpoken of with reſpect to their carriage and behaviour under Divine Providences.

The firſt Advice then is,

1. *Be not righteous overmuch*], that is, conſidering that a juſt Man periſheth in his righteouſneſs, do thou look to thy righteouſneſs, that thou mayſt not by any miſtake therein expoſe thy ſelf to a periſhing condition: If Men periſh in a good righteouſneſs by others, Do not thou

thou deſtroy thy ſelf by a bad and overgrown righteouſneſs.

Now, This Errour and exceſs in Righteouſneſs may ariſe two ways.

1. In matter of Opinion], by adding to the Word, ſetting up, and ſtanding ſtifly upon that which the Word of God doth not warrant; but, though it may ſeem to be an high thing, and to have much of righteouſneſs in it, yet, being well ſearch'd, there's nothing in it but a wiſdom and righteouſneſs of a mans own making. Thus *Saul* and the People ſpared for Sacrifice, wherein they might ſeem religious, but they held before themſelves a falſe light, *viz.* that to ſacrifice was better than to obey: Thus alſo *Peter* (by miſtake and meaning to be righteous) was righteous overmuch, when he ſaid, *Not ſo Lord*, *Acts* 10. 14. That which ſeems high righteouſneſs may be high unrighteouſneſs if a Man make himſelf his own Lawgiver, *Jam.* 4. 11, 12. 1 Sam. 15. 15, 22.

Upon this it may be infer'd, *Why ſhouldſt thou deſtroy thy ſelf?* for ſuch a danger there is if a man do not conceive and think right things, but ſpeak

and act upon misconceits; as we see in the Friends of *Job* *, against whom *Gods Wrath was kindled*, so that there needed a Sacrifice that God might not deal with them according to their folly, which deserved destruction; and yet they thought they pleaded the cause of God and the cause of Righteousness; but God saith, they spake not *right*, they were overmuch righteous in ascribing so much to humane righteousness, as to think God must still make much of such in an outward way; and therefore that *Job* could not be a righteous man, because God dealt so severely with him. This made God angry, unto which destroying is next, *Deut. 9. 20.* Thus he that would not smite the Prophet (albeit that might seem an unrighteous and horrid thing, yet) because he prefer'd his own reason before the special command of God at that time, was slain by a Lion, 1 *Kings* 20. 35, 36. *John Baptist* seems to say there was no seemliness in Christs being baptized by him, and there seemed to be good reason for it; but Christ lets him know that what he thought was not right, but it became Him to be baptized of *John* upon the ac-

* Job 42. 7, 18.

account of righteouſneſs, *Mat.* 3. 14,15. And *John* thereupon, yielded quickly, and ſo prevented that dreadful check, which was returned over-righteous and over-reſolute *Peter* in the like caſe, *John* 13. 6, 7, 8. Any Man that ſuffers or is deſtroy'd for this fault, though it be by the hand of God, yet may be ſaid to deſtroy himſelf, becauſe himſelf is the cauſe of it, as *Hoſ.* 13. 9.

2. In matter of practice and carriage] ſo he is righteous overmuch, that is, rigid overmuch in his dealing with others under the pretence and name of righteouſneſs; as *Saul* muſt needs kill *Jonathan*, under a pretence of zeal for God, in regard of the (improvident) curſe under which he had bound the People, though *Jonathan* heard it not, 1 *Sam.* 14. 27, 28, 29. And ſuch a kind of zeal he had in ſlaying the *Gibeonites*, (as ſeeming to reſpect the honour of God's people with whom ſuch were not fit to be mixt) whereby he deſtroyed ſeven of his Sons (a part of himſelf) 2 *Sam.* 21. 2, 6, 9. So the *Corinthians*, that were negligent at firſt, did over-do at laſt, 2 *Cor.* 2. 6, 7, 8.

The Second Advice is,

Be not overmuch wicked]; Where

1. We may obſerve (as in the former Precept) that *Solomon*'s meaning here is not to give way to any to be wicked in ſome leſs degrees; no more than it follows that a Man may be angry as much as he will till the Sun go down, becauſe *Paul* ſaith, *Let not the Sun go down upon your wrath*, *Epheſ.* 4. 26. Or that men need not pay leſs Tithes, ſo they look to weightier matters, becauſe Chriſt frowns upon the hypocriſie that was in the one while they omitted the other, *Mat.* 23. 23. ye ought (ſaith Chriſt) to have done the greater and the leſs both; ſo all wickedneſs (whether little or much) is to be avoided, becauſe it makes us liable to the Curſe of God, *Gal.* 3. 10.

2. This then may be the meaning; Do not, becauſe a wicked Man *prolongeth his days in his wickedneſs*, give thy ſelf the rains, to be wicked in the higheſt degree, over and above what is in other wicked men, *Jer.* 5. 28. ſo that this ſeems to agree with what *Solomon* ſaith after-

afterward; *Becauſe Sentence againſt an evil work is not executed ſpeedily; therefore the heart of the ſons of men is fully ſet in them to do evil*, Eccleſ. 8. 11. to be brimful of wickedneſs.

But, *Be not wicked overmuch* (ſaith the Wiſe-man) *neither be thou* (in being ſo wicked) *fooliſh*, and an enemy to thy ſelf: For, this ſinning with an high hand, however God prolong the life of other wicked men, may make him cut off thee out of hand, *Pſal.* 55. 23. *Numb.* 25. 7, 8.

Now, If the words in theſe two Verſes be taken in their latitude; the former Precept may be extended to all thoſe that in any thing overſhoot themſelves by leaning to their own wiſdom (yea, howſoever they aim at righteouſneſs and holineſs in it) ſo far as to go beyond that which the Wiſdom of God will warrant.

And the latter Precept may alſo be applied to all thoſe, who leaning to their own fooliſhneſs, enlarge themſelves in wickedneſs, under the hope of impunity.

But yet, There is a ſecond Interpretation of theſe words, which ſeemeth

more agreeable to the context, which ariſeth not ſo much from the conſideration of the perſons here ſpoken to, in reference to their carriage or miſcarriage under Divine Providences, as to the cenſure of theſe perſons in regard of God himſelf that ordereth out theſe Providences, inaſmuch as they run croſs to the ſenſe, and corrupt reaſon of ſhallow men.

And then, The meaning of the former Precept, will be this; when thou ſeeſt a juſt man periſh in his righteouſneſs, *Be not thou overmuch righteous*, to wit, in charging God fooliſhly, as if he did not govern the world equally, *Job* 1. 22. (He's always righteous overmuch, that makes as if God were not righteous enough), *Why ſhouldeſt thou deſtroy thy ſelf*, by quarrelling his adminiſtration? *Job* 9. 4. & 34. 17. & 33. 12, 13.

Hereupon, the Second Precept will ſound to this ſenſe; when thou ſeeſt a wicked man prolong his days in his wickedneſs, *Be not thou wicked overmuch*; as if God did let all alone, and ſo wink at the carriage of men, as that they may be as bad as they will, and yet fare never the worſe, *Pſal.* 50. 21. *Zeph.* 1. 12. *Mal.* 2. 17. & 3. 14, 15.

In

In brief, it may be ſaid, that theſe two Sayings ſet forth two ſins:

1. The accuſing of Providence, becauſe the juſt periſh, expreſs'd by, *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy ſelf over-wiſe*, as if thou couldſt deviſe a wiſer way of ordering the world.

And 2. The abuſing of Providence, and of Gods Patience towards wicked men unto all licentiouſneſs, expreſſed by, *Be not wicked overmuch.*

Unto both theſe Extreams, the Pſalmiſt (upon the ſame workings of Providence that are here deſcribed, *ver.*15.) ſheweth our proneneſs, who on the one ſide are ready to condemn the generation of the righteous, that is, to charge God becauſe he putteth them under ſuch bitter Providences, *Pſal.* 73. 13, 14, 15. And on the other ſide, are ready to warp and nod towards the profane world becauſe they proſper, *Pſal.*73. 10, 11, 12. If godly Men go ſo far, no marvel if the ungodly come quite over too, and are bold in both theſe Extreams.

Sutable hereunto is the cloſe that followeth, *v.*18. *Take hold*, ſuffer not to ſlip, ſay to thy heart, *withdraw not thy hand from*, the counſel given on both parts

in the former Verſes; for it is *the fear of God*, and the reverent obſervation of what God ſaith in his Word, that will help a man to come clear off from the evils and inconveniences of both the Extreams, and to walk in the middle way, which is to be righteous according to the Rule though there be ruin by it; and not to be wicked againſt the Rule, though Proſperity accompany it: And again, This Fear of God will keep a man from uttering or acting any thing againſt God or his Word, whatſoever tentation there be thereunto by his preſent Providence. It is the *Sanctuary* (where the Fear of God is taught) that ſets all right, *Pſal.* 34. 11. *Pſal.* 73. 17, &c.

Eccleſ. 9. 2.

All things come alike to all: There is one event to the righteous and to the wicked, to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that ſacrificeth, and to him that ſacrificeth not; as is the good, ſo is the ſinner, and he that ſweareth as he that feareth an Oath.

Qu. *IS it abſolutely ſo that all things come alike to all?*

Anſw. It is ſo in regard of thoſe outward things, as riches, poverty; health, ſickneſs; honour, diſhonour; whereof *Solomon* ſpeaks thus, to ſhew the vanity of Men that do ſo exceſſively deſire thoſe things which they may have whom Hell ſhall have; yea, in Goſpel-times, worſe outward things befal the good than the bad, becauſe God will exerciſe and adorn their ſpiritual graces and comforts.

But howſoever the things of this life befalling good and bad men be the ſame in themſelves, yet if we judg of the works

works of God by the Word of God; there is in regard of the Persons of good and bad men a very great difference, both here and hereafter.

First, here] in regard of the Cause, Concomitants, and the End and Effect.

1. In regard of the Cause and Root out of which outward Dispensations do arise. For,

1. As for good Men, if they have these outward good things, they have them out of Gods love, (*Jer.* 31. 2, 3. 4. 20, 21.) and mercy, as *Jacob* had his two bands, *Gen.* 32. 9, 10. & 33. 5. And if they want them, it is out of love that they want them (as it is out of love that a Father will not fill his Childs purse) because they would be like to be worse for them, *Prov.* 30. 8, 9.

2. As for bad Men, they have great outward enjoyments.

1. From Gods general Providence and Bounty, *Psal.* 145. 9, 15, 16. *Luke* 6. 35.

2. Perhaps also out of respect to the prayers of some good Men to whom they are called, and Gods good-will to those

thoſe dear Servants of his, *Gen.* 19. 21. as *Gen.* 17. 18, 20. 2 *Chron.* 22. 9.

3. Becauſe God hath ſome great work for them to do; and therefore furniſheth them for it, and enricheth them by it, *Iſa.* 45. 1, to *v.* 6.

4. Becauſe God will not leave himſelf without witneſs, *Acts* 14. 17.

5. Nor them without Wages, 2 *Kings* 10. 30. *Jer.* 27. 6. *Verily, they have their Reward*, *Mat.* 6. 2. Thus for the Fountain.

2. In regard of the things accompanying theſe outward enjoyments or afflictions; For,

1. If we ſpeak of good and comfortable things; Good men have,

1. A better Title to them, enjoying them in Chriſt, the Heir of all things, by a more ſpecial and ſweet right than any out of Chriſt have, 1 *Cor.* 3. 22, 23. *Mat.* 5. 5. who have them out of common kindneſs rather than Covenant-love.

2. And a gift and ſuch grace from God to uſe them for Gods glory and their own comfort as others have not, *Eccleſ.* 2. 26.

3. They have alſo much more content in the enjoyment of them, than worldlings have, *Pſal.* 16. 5, 6. *Prov.* 10. 22. with *Eccleſ.* 5. 17. 1 *Tim.* 6. 6.

2.

2. If we ſpeak evil, that is, of afflicting things and an hard outward condition, even in that alſo Good men differ very much from graceleſs men;

For, In all afflictions, 1. They that fear God have that gracious Preſence of God that others have not; what-ever waves ariſe, yet Chriſt is in the Ship with them; and if they be ſick (yea, though of the Plague, that others dare not come near them) yet God will be ſo near to them, as to make all their beds in their ſickneſs, turning and toſſing, changing and altering it (as the Original word ſignifies) for their greater eaſe, *Pſal.* 41. 3. Or, If they be in Priſon, it is better with them than with other men. *Joſeph* and other the Kings Priſoners were bound in the ſame Priſon, but the Lord was with *Joſeph* in a far more gracious manner than with them, (*Gen.* 39. 21, 22, 23.) making him the Ruler there, and all he did to proſper.

2. The Godly, in their diſtreſs have ſuch promiſes as others have not, yea, even in regard of the things of this life, 1 *Tim.* 4. 8. as, that he will ſtrengthen them on their bed of languiſhing, *Pſal.* 41. 3. and lay no more upon them in any

any kind than they ſhall be able to bear, and will find out a way for them, 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. and make all to work for good unto them, *Rom.* 8. 27. ſuch Promiſes are good mens Priviledges, *Iſa.* 3. 10, 11. *Eccleſ.* 8. 12, 13. for unto a wicked man God ſaith, *What haſt thou to do to take my Covenant in thy mouth?* Pſal. 50. 16.

3. And the Children of God have ſuch Providences alſo, and workings of Gods hand for their ſupport and refreſhing (however their troubles be very great) as others have not. Thus *Jacob* obſerves and ſpeaks as if he were exceedingly comforted with the Lords rebuking of *Laban* in his behalf, *Gen.* 31. 42. *Jehoſaphat* and *Ahab* were in the ſame Battel, but *Ahab* though he ſought and thought to avoid the danger by his diſguiſing was ſlain, and *Jehoſaphat*, by the hand of Heaven was reſcued; for it was *the Lord that helped him and moved the Enemy to depart from him*, 2 *Chron.* 18. 29, 31, 33.

4. They have grace alſo to keep them from that ſin into which others (being preſs'd with affliction) fall, *Pſal.* 125. 3. *John* 17. 15. *David* was perſecuted by *Saul*, & *Saul* was proſecuted & afflicted by

by the *Philiſtins*; but mark the difference, *Saul* goes to a Witch, falls all along in deſpair, and at length kills himſelf: But *David* could never be drawn to kill *Saul*, and in all his perſecution God kept up his Spirit. The Rod of that wicked *Saul* did not ſo reſt upon him as to deject him, *Pſal.* 11. 1. or infect him ſo, as to make him put forth his hand to wickedneſs, *Pſal.* 125. 3. See 1 *Sam.* 28. 7, 8, 20. & 24. 13. & 26. 9, 10, 11.

5. They have ſuch a Comforter *as the world knows not*, and that is the Spirit of God, which *dwelleth in them, and ſhall be with them*, *John* 14.16,17. ſo that in whatſoever Priſon or preſſure they are, therein that Comforter is with them alſo; and being *the Spirit of Truth*, it comforts them ſtill by one Truth of Scripture or other, *Pſal.* 119. 50. unto which is added his inward Seal and Witneſs *with their Spirits*, of their good and happy eſtate, *Rom.* 8. 16, 17.

6. Whereas worldly Men, when their troubles are very great, are ſunk in deſpair, Gods Children when they are in the higheſt diſtreſs here, have their higheſt comfort in their Redeemer moſt im-

imprinted and engraven upon their hearts, *Job* 19. 25, 26, 27. 28.

Thus there is a difference in what accompanieth the diſaſters of good and bad men.

3. There is a difference in the end, effects and conſequences of the condition of good and evil men; for the afflictions of good men build them up ſpiritually, *Pſal.* 119. 71. and keep them from being condemned with the world, 1 *Cor.* 11. 32. And are their way to glory, *Acts* 14. 22. But the proſperity of the ungodly ſlays them, *Prov.* 1. 32. becauſe thereby they ſin ſo much the more, *Pſal.* 73. 6, 9. and ſo lay up for themſelves a greater treaſure and meaſure of wrath againſt the laſt day, *Rom.* 2. 4, 5.

Theſe things make a great difference here.

Secondly, If all things be alike here, yet nothing ſhall be alike hereafter, *Mal.* 3. 28. but all unlike; There ſhall be a different Name, *Sheep and Goats*, *Bleſſed and Curſed*; a different Hand, *right and left*; a different Sentence, *Come*

Come ye Bleſſed, and *Go ye Curſed*; a different Portion, *Everlaſting Fire*, and a *prepared Kingdom*: And Laſtly, far different Company; *the Devil and his Angels*, muſt be wicked Mens Companions, together with all their wicked Companions in Sin unrepented of here: But all that truly fear God, ſhall be with the Lord of Glory, with the Holy Angels and glorified Saints for evermore, *Mat.* 25, 34. 41. 1 *Theſ.* 4. 17, 18.

Eccleſ.

Eccleſ. 9. 7, 8, 9.

Go thy way, eat thy Bread with joy, and drink thy Wine with a merry heart; for God accepteth thy works.

Let thy Garments be always white, and let thine Head lack no Ointment, &c.

Qu. ARe *theſe the words of ſenſual Men; or, Are they* Solomon's *wiſe and ſerious Sayings?*

Anſw. 1. They are not to be taken as the words of ſenſual Men, deviſing, preſenting, and allowing to themſelves the utmoſt carnal pleaſure; for though the the things ſpoken of be ſo fully ſet forth in a way pleaſing to nature, that they ſeem to be the very ſame things that an Epicure would have, if he might have his will; yet theſe following things may be obſerved which make for the contrary. For,

1. Carnal and voluptuous Men do not uſe to ſpeak altogether in ſuch a language as is here uſed:

As 1. Laying this down, in the firſt

place, that what they make merry withal ſhall be truly their own [*thy Bread, thy Wine*], but oft they eat and drink, and dance with what they can get of other mens, as 1 *Sam.* 30. 16. 1 *Kings* 21. 7, 16. *Amos* 4. 1.

2. Nor do they build their mirth upon this ground, that *God accepteth their works*; perhaps, they may think ſo in a way of preſumption, (as *Pſal.* 50. 21.) but not in true conſtruction, or upon any real and ſolid proof of Gods acceptance; as will appear by opening theſe words [*God accepteth thy works*] which may be taken two ways.

1. In a generality, and in way of ſuppoſition; as if he had ſaid, It appeareth that God favoureth thee, bleſſeth and proſpereth thee in thy imployments and enjoyments; therefore Be merry.

Or 2. Particularly, and in a way of approbation, in regard of the chearful uſe of the Creatures here ſpoken of: [*now*] God accepteth thy works, that is, He is well-pleaſed with what thou *now* doſt, whilſt thou eateſt and drinkeſt, and makeſt the beſt of theſe earthly enjoyments; as He was pleas'd with *Eſther's* Feaſts and royal Apparel; even theſe

theſe outward works God accepteth when his glory is reſpected in them, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31.

Now, which way ſoever the words be taken, carnal and graceleſs men look not to Gods acceptation.

3. Whereas [*the days of the life of thy Vanity*] is here once and again mentioned, carnal and jovial men, (enjoying the fulneſs of outward things do not look on this life as a life of Vanity, but rather as a ſtate of Felicity. *Solomon*'s aim in all this Book, is to prove all things below to be Vanity; and when he hath ſaid all, proſperous worldlings will not be perſwaded it is ſo.

4. Here is *labouring under the Sun*, and a Precept conjoined, *ver.* 10. to do that which there is occaſion to do, 1 *Sam.* 7. 10. *with our might.* Now Epicures are rather voluptuous than vigorous, and do not uſe to impoſe upon themſelves hard labour, though thereby they might fare better.

Thus it may appear by the words ſpoken, that ſenſual and bruitiſh men do not ſpeak them.

2. It may further appear, becauſe if *Solomon* had inſerted this as ſpoken by

men given up wholly to earthly delights, and encouraging themſelves in the purſuit of carnal pleaſure, then it's very probable he would have joined with it ſome rebuke or other of it, and caution againſt it, as *chap.* 11. 9. but inſtead of that, he is ever and anon mentioning this joyful uſe of our enjoyments as the beſt thing that is to be had from them, that is, while the joy is joined with, and made ſubſervient unto the ſerving of God in our places, which in the tenth Verſe is intimated, and ſtill to be ſuppoſed; See *chap.* 2. 24. & 3. 12, 13, 22. & 5. 18. & 8. 15.

Queſt. *What difference is there then between Epicures and Frolicks; and Men that fear God in the free uſe of outward Enjoyments?*

Anſw. 1. A good Man is afraid to pleaſe himſelf with that (though he long never ſo much after it) which he conceives is not ſo well come by; as we ſee in *David* that would not meddle with the waters of the Well of *Bethlehem*, 2 *Sam.* 23. 16, 17. But wicked and ſenſual Men, drink *the Wine of the condemned*, that is, they

they make merry, not with their own Wine, but that which they have procured by Fines and Amercements laid on Men unjuſtly condemned, nor do they uſe their own clothes, but the clothes of others *laid to pledg*, *Amos* 2. 8.

2. An Epicure uſeth the Creature ſo as to exclude and ſhut out the Service of God: when God calls to mourning he goes to feaſting, *Iſa.* 22. 12. But a good Man ſo as to aſſiſt Service; when *Jehoſaphat* hath all abundance, his heart is *lift up in the ways of God*, 2 *Chron.* 17. 5, 6.

3. A Senſual Man uſeth the good things he hath, ſo as to nouriſh ſin, feeding himſelf like an Horſe, and then *neighing after his Neighbours Wife*, *Jer.* 5. 8. but good Men ſo, as to prevent and reaſon againſt it (as *Joſeph* did, *Gen.* 39. 8, 9.) becauſe God hath ſo mercifully provided for them, *Ezra* 9. 13, 14.

4. Epicures mind and make much of themſelves, but quite *forget the affliction of Joſeph*, *Amos* 6. 6. But good Men when they prepare moſt for themſelves, are mindful of thoſe *for whom nothing is prepared*, *Nehem.* 8. 10. or, if they be

wanting this way, they ſay (as the fully-fed Lepers when their Brethren were under ſo great want) *We do not well*, 2 *Kings* 7. 8, 9.

5. An Epicure uſeth the Comforts of the Creature, ſo as to diſſweeten Heaven, and ſo as that the things of God have no reliſh with them, *Job* 21.14,15. *Pſal.* 119. 70. But a good Man, ſo as to ſweeten the Earth, and to give an allay to the bitterneſs here below, *Prov.* 31. 6, 7.

Hitherto of the Anſwer of this Queſtion Negatively. Theſe are not the Words of Senſual Men.

2. (To Anſwer it Affirmatively) I ſay, They are *Solomon*'s own words, yea, the words of the Spirit of God by which he wrote this Book, which may appear, and be proved divers ways.

1. From the cauſe of ſuch an uſe of outward things as *Solomon* here ſpeaks of; for it proceedeth from a ſpecial *Gift of God*, *Eccleſ.* 5. 19. which God giveth to Men *good in his ſight*, and that in diſtinction from *Sinners*, *Chap.* 2. 24,26. It cannot therefore but be good; yea, good and comely. *Chap.* 5, 18.

2. From

2. From the things to which this chearful use of the Creatures in all this Book is opposed; It is not opposed to a moderate use (for this also must be moderate though free) but to a covetous, niggardly, sordid and vexatious enjoyment of them, which is indeed a not-enjoyment of them. This we see, *chap.* 2. 22, 23. where the vexation and sorrow is put down first, and such counsel as this after, *ver.* 24 So also *chap.* 5. 17, 18.

3. From the thing aimed at in this hortatory permission, and (seemingly) carnal counsel; which is not,

1. To shut out spiritual joy, (which is of all other the most necessary and the most noble, *Luke* 10. 20. *Rom.* 14. 17. *Phil.* 4. 4. 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. for *Solomon* saith otherwhere, that *a merry heart* (which proceedeth especially from the sight of Gods Countenance, *Psal.* 2. 7, 8. and from a good conscience), *is a continual Feast*, *Prov.* 15. 15. 2 *Cor.* 1. 12.

2. Nor is it *Solomon*'s mind here to shut out sorrow and moderate mourning; for he hath before (*chap.* 7. 2, 3, 4.) prefer'd sadness before laughter, and the house of mourning before the house of mirth.

3. Nor doth he allow any ſuch Creature-content, or extent of rejoycing therein, as will hinder a man in his Calling here; for he would have a man to be a mighty Doer in it, *ver.* 10. nor ſuch as will make a man ſecure and unmindful of the laſt day; for that he declares himſelf againſt, *chap.* 11. 9. & 12. 14.

But His intent is only to ſhew that a man muſt neither affect, nor ſend for ſadneſs by cares, fears, or diſcontents with ſuch providences as do not pleaſe him; nor be therefore ſad and diſmal, becauſe he will not make uſe of the Creatures that would make him chearful: That therefore which he adviſeth to, is, to make the beſt of the world, to afford our ſelves what is to be had from it for our more comfortable living in our Calling, and, for the generality, and when God calls us not away from it by ſpecial occaſions of abſtinence and mourning, to delight our ſelves in, and refreſh our ſelves with, the *great goodneſs of God* in theſe outward things, *Nehem.* 9. 25. *Gen.* 18. 5.

4. From the manner of *Solomon*'s ſpeaking here, which may put us in mind of divers limitations, whereby what

what is ſaid here is to be regulated and reſtrained.

As 1. In regard of the things here named and to be rejoyced in, that they ſhould be *our own* (as was ſaid before) that is honeſtly come by; Not *ſtoln Bread or Wine*, *Prov.* 9. 17. *Amos* 4. 1. Not Apparel pull'd off others backs, *Mica.* 2. 8. Not a ſtrange Woman, but ones own Wife *whom he loveth*, and ought to love and take all pleaſure in; of which *Solomon* ſpeaks other-where, with larger and more expreſs allowances than are mentioned here, *Prov.* 5. 15, 19. yet doth he not mean that we ſhould ſo ſolace and make much of our ſelves with that which is our own as *Nabal* did, 1 *Sam.* 25. 11. grudging others any part in it who need it, *Prov.* 31. 20. and may juſtly expect it; for *Solomon*'s Precept afterwards is, *Caſt thy Bread upon the Waters, Give a Portion to ſeven, and alſo to eight*, *chap.* 11. 1, 2.

2. A limitation is here to be underſtood, in regard of the meaſure and manner of uſing joyfully our enjoyments; for *Solomon* is an enemy to exceſs, *Prov.* 23. 20, 21. Albeit therefore he mentioneth here a liberal uſe of the Creatures, yet

yet he alloweth not an unlimited uſe; yea, This is a certain Truth that no man can uſe the Creatures joyfully that uſeth them exceſſively: for then, they overcharge the heart, diſtemper the body, and trouble the conſcience, *Luke* 21. 34. *Prov.* 23. 29. *Mark* 6. 21, 22, 26. We muſt not think that *Solomon* gives ſuch a liberty to others as he would not take himſelf; Now though he himſelf gave himſelf to ſearch, find, and take a trial of the utmoſt of Creature-delights; yet ſtill he *kept his acquaintance with wiſdom, chap.* 2. 3, 9. the Rules and Bounds whereof therefore, he gives no other man leave (here) to tranſgreſs.

3. And a limitation may be here gathered from the time, expreſſed thus, *The days of the life of thy Vanity which he* * *hath given thee under the Sun*; whereby he doth not mean that ſince a man can enjoy theſe tranſitory comforts only in this poor and vain life; therefore he ſhould live like an Epicure with them, *Iſa.* 22. 12, 13. but that, ſince in this life only we can have the comfort of them (as it is, *ver.* 6.) therefore we ſhould take it while we may have it, and ſweeten the days of our vanity with

* That is, God.

with it; And withal minding us, that He speaks all this, not as if there were not a greater Happiness to be looked after (there where there shall be no Sun, *Rev.* 22. 5. yea here, under a better Sun, *Mal.* 4. 2. *Cant.* 2. 3.) but that, as to our outward state here in this world, there's nothing better than to walk in the fear of the Lord (for that's the great thing that *Solomon* supposeth and proposeth in this Book, *chap.* 12. 13.) and with labouring in our Callings (which here he expresseth) and (thus walking and that we may the better thus walk) take that lawful comfort from the Creatures which is to be had from them; so that I think *Solomon* means no more than what is said elsewhere, *viz.* That we should serve the Lord with joy, in the abundance of all things, *Deut.* 28. 47.

Eccleſ. 5. 5.

Better it is that thou ſhouldſt not Vow, than that thou ſhouldſt Vow and not pay.

Q. 1. *SInce* Solomon *gives ſuch a liberty for not Vowing, it may be demanded what uſe there is eſpecially of Vowing, and what Grounds there are in Goſpel-times?*

Anſw. The anſwering of this requireth the diſtinguiſhing of Vows; which are of three Sorts.

1. *Ceremonial*], which (according to the will of God, *Pſal.* 76, 11.) were made, and were, by expreſs Command, to be paid by the People of God in the Old Teſtament; and in thoſe Times and to that People, were a part of the Worſhip of God; becauſe the matter of them was (then) commanded of God, as the vowing of Sacrifices, *Pſal.* 66. 13. and Preſents to be brought *to the place of the Name of the Lord of Hoſts, the Mount of Zion*, *Iſa.* 18. 7. Such Vows as theſe, or the Vowing of ſuch things as theſe are

See *Ainſw.* on Levit. 27. 1.

are now abrogated: theſe being *Times of Reformation*, and another ſort of Church-adminiſtration, *Heb.* 9. 10.

2. *Moral*], as to walk in obedience to God, *Pſal.* 119. 106. and to perform the Duties required in his Word, both in the Old and New Teſtament, which we are apt to let ſlip, but may hold the faſter by helping our infirmity by a *Vow*: of which nature the *Vow of Baptiſm* is, and ſubſequent Covenant-renewings for the better performing of it.

3. *Miniſterial, auxiliary, ſubſervient*], wherein the matter is not (as it is in the *moral Vow*) a thing commanded, but ſome indifferent thing; as to give ſo much to the poor, to abſtain from ſuch or ſuch Meats or Drinks, in both which God gives a liberty; yet there may be need of reſtraining a mans ſelf in the latter, that is, in this or that Creature wherein he uſeth to exceed, and to bind himſelf in the former, that is, in devoting ſome ſum to the poor, that he may not be ſo defective as nature (without ſuch a bond) uſeth to be, and is ſtill like to be, in the Duty of Charity.

Now for the lawfulneſs, expediency and ſuitableneſs of a Vow to the will of God,

God, these two latter ways, that is, for me to *Vow*, to do what God requires, and to use all helps that will truly and in reality assist me to do it the better, there are these grounds.

1. There is a Ground in nature; there having been the custom of vowing in all Nations, because nature hath implanted this in Men, when they desire or have obtained any special benefit from God, to testifie their thankfulness in some voluntarily-vowed retribution. * This we find in the Mariners, who being put in fear of the true God, did not only offer a Sacrifice to him for the present, but did also *make Vows*, whereby they did some way or other engage themselves to him for the time to come. *Jona* 1. 16.

* Me Tabula sacer votiva paries indicat humida suspendisse vestimenta potenti Maris Deo. *Hor.* 1. Carm. Od. 5.

2. A further Ground of this and a better, will appear from Scripture:

As 1. From *Isa.* 19. 21. *They shall vow a Vow unto the Lord and perform it.* It is spoken of the *Egyptians*, that should be called into the Church, and so hath respect, especially, unto Gospel-times. *Acts* 8. 27, 37, 38.

2. From divers Passages in the *Psalms*.

As 1. *Psal.* 50. 14.] where God sets aside

aſide and ſleights (as it were) things ceremonial, *ver.* 8. 13. and yet ſpeaks of Vows, as things of another nature, and of perpetual uſe, as the ſervice of thanksgiving is, *Heb.* 13. 15.

2. *Pſal.* 65. 1.] *Unto thee ſhall the Vow be performed*, where the words following, *Unto thee all fleſh ſhall come*, *ver.* 2. ſeems to carry it covertly to the Church of the Gentiles, and ſo to Goſpel-times.

3. *Pſal.* 76. 11.] *Vow and pay, Bring Preſents to him that ought to be feared*; ſo that the fear of God inferreth Vowing (in ſome ſenſe) and bringing Preſents unto God, as even nature it ſelf teacheth Heathens to bring Preſents to thoſe whom they fear, reverence and magnifie, and ſo to God himſelf when they are once converted; See *Gen.* 32. 18. 2 *Chron.* 32. 23. 1 *Kings* 10. 25. *Iſa.* 18. 7.

But concerning theſe Scriptures, this is to be obſerved:

1. That as they expreſs a ceremonial Duty as the matter of the Vow, ſo they belong to the Jews and not to us; as when Sacrifices were vowed, or the giving of this or that to the uſe of the Temple. It is obſerved that their voluntary

tary Sacrifices were for the most part vowed things *; See *Levit.* 7. 16. *Psal.* 66. 13, 14. and 116. 17, 18. *Judg.* 11. 31. And divers things they Vowed, on special occasions for Gods use, and for the service that was then in use, (as *Numb.* 21. where it is supposed that the persons being destroyed, their Goods were confiscate to the Lord, as *Josh.* 6. 19. so 1 *Sam.* 1. 11.) such things concern'd those times.

* *Calv.* in Deut. 23. 21.

2. As they implied and contained in the substance and end of them, a moral Duty, so they are left on recotd for our direction and imitation; not in regard of the specialty which they vowed *, but in regard of the generality, and that real duty, which in their vowing was intended, as to strengthen our Faith in God for any special thing that we have cause to desire, which seems to have occasioned that Vow, *Numb.* 21. 1, 2. because it was so sad a thing that a *Canaanite* should take any of *Israel* captive; wherein they might think God would relieve them, when they renounced their own private gain if they got the better, and vowed they would do that which was so agreeable to the will of God,

* As in Sacrifices without which their thank-Vows were never paid in publick, *Moller* in Psal. 56. 13.

God, *Josh.6.17.24.* as concerning those cursed *Canaanites*, and whereby (if they did as God would have them do at *Jericho*, *Josh. 6. 19.* God should be (in a sort) a gainer; unto this confirming of our Faith, we may add also inciting and assisting of our selves in the Duty of thanksgiving: Of this, that Vowing that we read so often of in the Psalms * is to be understood; and unto these two ends, the Vow of *Jacob*, *Jepthah*, *Hannah*, and others * may be refer'd.

So that the thing which is to be collected from the Scriptures that speak of *Vowing* in the Old Testament, is,

1. As to the *Jews*; that they were to Vow (such of them as had just cause † to do it) and (absolutely) to perform their Vows, and bring Presents to God according to the prescribed way of God, that was in use and in force in those times.

2. As to us; to look to the substance, that is, to vow obedience to God in our Baptism (which is a thing that belongs to all); And to Vow otherwise (as we find just occasion upon due deliberation) in the way and according to the Rules of the New Testament, that is, for

* *Calv.* Instit. l. 40. S. 4.

* Psal. 132. 2, 3. with 2 Sam. 7. 2. So 1 Chro. 4. 10.

† See *Perkins* Cas. c. 14. Howbeit not all Jews had a command to Vow in the Old Testament, but only such as had just cause to make a Vow, otherwise they had liberty to abstain from Vowing. Deut. 23. 22.

our help in doing the will of God, testifying of our thankfulness; yea, the *Jews* also were to look principally unto that substance of obedience which is required both in the Old and New Testament; for God never regarded their outward Sacrifices as they were a complement, (*Jer.* 7. 22. *Micah* 6. 6,7,8.) but as in them they made a Covenant, (*Psal.* 50. 5.) offered and engaged themselves in all holy obedience that they might become his humble Servants for the great favour and mercy he afforded them; In this *David* is plain, when he saith, *O Lord, I am thy Servant*, *Psal.* 116. 16.

To illustrate this in one instance; *Jacob* (to help his Faith, when he was in a strait, and to assist and declare his thankfulness before-hand) Voweth three things. The First is, Moral, *Then shall the Lord be my God*, *Gen.* 28. 20, 21. The Second is, Ceremonial, *This Stone shall be Gods House*; that is, a place holy and consecrated to God for his Altar-worship, *Gen.* 35. 7. The Third is, Ministerial, auxiliatory, testificatory; that is, a voluntary engagement to declare his thankfulness in giving without fail unto

unto God *the Tenth* of all that which God ſhould give to him.

The Firſt of theſe belongs to us who are bound to make every ſpecial mercy a new obligation, acceſſion, and attractive to aſſiſt us (unto whom God can never be dear enough) in loving the Lord and cleaving to him, *Pſal.* 116. 1, 2. whereunto it is not unlawful for us, but may be uſeful to us, to bind our ſelves by a ſpecial Vow upon ſpecial occaſion; or by a ſpecial renewing of our Baptiſmal-Covenant before God, and re-obliging our ſelves thereunto.

The Second, of building an Altar and offering Sacrifices, belonged to the Times of the Old Teſtament.

As to the Third, that which concerns us therein, is, to teſtifie our thankfulneſs when God frees us from our great fears, and grants our earneſt deſires, by honouring the Lord with our Riches, and by Vowing (if we be convinced that ſuch an help is needful to prevent our trifling with God) to give ſome conſiderable part of our Eſtates to ſuch uſes as whereby God may have it moſt. Now if we ſhall thus Vow and engage our

ſelves before-hand in a kind of conditional way, we muſt always ſee that our meaning be not to indent with God, as if he ſhould have nothing from us unleſs we have what we need from him (God ſhould have been *Jacob*'s God though he had not granted his requeſt); but it muſt be to wreſtle with God the better, and to ſtrengthen our weak faith as concerning the hearing of our prayer; it being an argument to move the Lord to do for us, or (to ſpeak more properly) to perſwade our ſelves and make our ſelves believe he will do for us, becauſe we are ſincerely willing to bind our ſelves to do for him: Not becauſe our doing is any thing to him, (*Job* 35. 7. *Pſal.* 16. 2.) but becauſe we have cauſe to hope that God will crown that grace of his in us whereby we are willing to do things of moment for him, and are careful to provide for his glory when he provides for our comfort.

Hitherto of Grounds of Vowing from Nature and Scripture; There may be added another Ground, *viz.*

3. From Reaſon agreeable both to Nature and Scripture; For Vows rightly made, as they are great Declarations of

of our reverent thoughts of God, so also they may be great assistances to us in the Duties we owe unto him, inasmuch as they proceed from weighty causes (for light matters are not the matter of a Vow), and the Bond thereof is so strait a Bond, that Conscience trembles to transgress the bounds to which by a Solemn Vow, we have confined our selves. It's good Discipline that keeps all in order, and Vows discreetly made are a Christians voluntary Discipline, and the hedg of Holiness *, whereby he restrains himself from extravagancies; as on the other side, he lays by them a willing constraint on himself, to do those important Duties which nature otherwise is untoward unto and treacherous in. Now if a Vow be an assistance, (truly and justly so) it is, as it were, demanded in the Duty it assisteth, which supposeth and imposeth the getting of all helps for the better performance of it. Yea, This Vowing hath so near and so helpful a conjunction and consociation with Prayer, that they pass in *Hebrew*, *Greek*, and *Latine*, under the same Name *; the Reason whereof is, because when we

Votum est Sepes Sanctimoniæ.

* Neder, εὐχὴ, Votum.

desire any thing more ardently, we are still ready to add a promise to the prayer that in that way we may look to have it the more hopefully. Hence it is that *David* saith, *Thou (O God) hast heard my Vows*, *Psal.* 61.5. that is, Prayers made with Vows, and which were afterward paid with thanksgiving, *Psal.* 116. 12, 17, 18.

By these things the lawfulness of a Vow appears, and that there is therein an agreeableness with the will of God revealed in his Word. Now,

If the Question further be, Whether there be any command for this Vowing?

To this I Answer, that, though there be everywhere commands for the performing of lawful Vows when they were made, yet I find not any-where (no not in the Old Testament where Vows are most mentioned) any very clear Command for the making of them *, but still they are spoken of as voluntary things; only there is one place where the expression looketh likest to a Command, to wit, *Psal.* 76. 11. *Vow and pay*; To which two Things may be said.

* Ad Ceremonialia illa Vota non quidem ex mandato tenebantur, erant enim libera & spontanea; sed tamen certo Verbo prescriptum erat, quæ & quomodo Deus in hoc genere sibi voveri vellet. *Chemnit.* Exam. p. 3. c. 60.

1. That

1. That it is not a Command or Imposition, but a Supposition, *Vow and pay*, that is, If thou Vow, be sure to pay. As when it is said, *Be ye angry and sin not*, *Ephes.* 4. 26. It is not a Command to be angry, but to see to it, if there be anger, that it be not sinful anger; and though the repetition in the latter part of the Verse, *Let all that be round about him bring Presents to him*, seem to be indeed a Precept, yet that also may be thus understood: If thou dost Vow the presenting of any thing to him, then do not dally with him, but be sure to *bring* it to him (as *Jacob* said, I will *surely* give the Tenth, *Gen.*28.22.) whereof the Reason followeth, for *he ought to be feared*; and therefore must not be mocked, which is agreeable to that in *Eccles.* 5. 7. Be not vain in thy Vows so as not to provide for the performance of them, *but fear thou God.*

2. That which may be said to that Scripture, Mr. *Perkins* lays down thus; *If* David *speaks of Moral Duties, then the Command concerns every Man; because the thing commanded is a part of Gods Worship: but if it be meant of Ceremonial Duties, it binds the Jews only; howbeit*

Perkins Cases of Vows, page 97.

howbeit not all, but only ſuch as had juſt cauſe to Vow; for otherwiſe they had liberty to abſtain from Vowing, Deut. 23. 22.

Unto which Anſwer of his, this alſo may be annexed, That if it be taken for a Precept to ſuch Perſons as have juſt cauſe to Vow for Moral Ends, then (though the matter of the Vow be different in the Old and New Teſtament) yet in regard of the End, it is reſolved into a Moral Vow, and ſo may be extended unto the Times of the Old and New Teſtament; but then it muſt be conſidered, that (being ſo taken) it is not a Precept in the generality binding all Men, but only ſuch and ſuch Men as have juſt cauſe to Vow for the help of their infirmity in the doing of that which God requireth.

So that the ſubſtance which can be gathered from that Scripture in reference to Goſpel-times, is, that it binds Men to bind themſelves in a generality to do the will of God according to their Baptiſmal Vow; and further, that it binds them to Vow that in indifferent things, which they find neceſſary for themſelves for their better fulfilling of the

the will of God, as namely, for the thankful acknowledgment of the goodness of God in great and glorious deliverances, such as that Psalm speaketh of, *ver.* 10.

And if the Words be taken thus, that is, for Vowing obedience, and Vowing assistance; the obedience that God requireth, and that assistance which (as to us) the obedience requires (according to the Rules of the Old Testament to the *Jews*, and the order and way of the New Testament, to us) I see not but they are, and continue still a Command for Vowing *; I say, a Command extended to all in regard of the Moral Obedience, and to all again in regard of the necessary assistance for that Obedience; I mean, in the generality, but not this or that assistance in the particular; which though this or that Man may be bound to, in regard of himself, because he cannot be so obedient, unless he take up and bind upon himself such an help; yet other Men are free that need it not, or that can better help themselves otherwise.

* Vota Moralia eadem sunt in veteri & novo Testamento, *Chemnit.* exam. par. 3. c. 60.

In short, (if I could be brief in a Question expos'd to so many interposings)

sings) *A Vow* or *Votive Promise* is twofold, *General* and *Personal.*

1. *General*] in, and in the renewing of, our Baptismal Covenant; as the *Jews* were bound in, and did often renew their Circumcision-Covenant (which was the same, for the substance of it, with ours in Baptism; the Covenant of Grace being ever the same) I say, they did often renew their Circumcision-Covenant; Namely, under *Moses* (a), *Joshua* (b), *Jehoash* (c), *Asa* (d), *Hezekiah* (e), *Josiah* (f); yea, and in their Sacrifices generally (though sometimes it might be done more expressly and eminently) they that were Saints, Gods favourites, and that weighed well what they did, *made a Covenant with him*, and put to their Seal (as it were) that they would be his faithful Allies.

(a) Exod. 24. 7.
(b) Josh. 24. 25.
(c) 2 King. 11. 17.
(d) 2 Chro. 15. 12.
(e) 2 Chro. 29. 10.
(f) 2 Chro. 34. 31, 32.

Hereunto, there is subordinate, yea, in this is included, another general Bond, to wit, to use (as hath been often said before) all needful helps for the performing of that Obedience and Duty, to which there is a præ-ingagement in the Covenant of Baptism, and a re-ingagement in the renewings thereof. That we are and are to be thus bound, may appear

appear from the Exposition of the Ten Commandments, and that extent that is ascribed to every Precept, to wit, that where any sin is forbidden, there the cause and occasion of that sin is forbidden also, as in the forbidding of Adultery, Riot and Luxury * is therewithal forbidden; and on the contrary, where a Duty is commanded, whatsoever is necessary for the performance of that Duty, is therein comprehended, as when the first and second Commandment require the worshipping of the true God according to his Word, it requires the forbearing of that Communion with Idolaters that will hinder it *, and to join our selves with those with whom we shall have opportunity and assistance for it, 2 *Chron.* 11. 13, 16.

Vid. *Rivet* Explic. Decal. p. 6.

* Jer. 5. 8.

* Deut. 7. 4. 2 Cor. 6. 14.

This may serve to shew that every Man is tied to that without which he shall not be able to do the will of God as he may if he take that help; as *Joseph* may be said to be bound to forbear (as he did, *Gen.* 39. 10.) the company of his tempting Mistress; not that it was a sin (in it self) to be *with her*, but if he had not avoided that, he would have been in more danger of *lying by her*.

There

There is, beſides this General,

2. A *Perſonal* ſolemn Promiſe or Vow that may be made, of uſing ſuch or ſuch an help, (being a bodily exerciſe, or ſomething in it ſelf indifferent) needful for ſuch or ſuch a perſon, which yet another may not need; And this it concerns thoſe only to betake themſelves unto, who are upon good and ſerious conſiderations, convinced of the need of it for their proper help, and that there will be a want in their Obedience to God if they bind not themſelves to it; yet herein they are ſo to limit themſelves in regard of the thing and the time as their neceſſity, with reſpect to the Moral Obedience they owe to God, requireth; avoiding the cenſuring of any others that take a greater liberty, in whom things are not ſo circumſtantiated as in themſelves.

Unto all that hath been ſpoken in this Queſtion, (which by reaching out for further information and ſatisfaction hath been ſo tedious) I ſhall for concluſion of the Queſtion whether Vows be required, add this diſtinction, *viz.* That in a Vow there are two Things.

1. An implicit but a ſincere purpoſe of

of heart to do what is required of God, and what we need as an help thereunto, *Psal.* 119. 57.

2. An explicit formal Vow in the presence of God that we will certainly do it, *Gen.* 28. 20, 22.

The former of these is so necessary, that to desire any grace of God, without a purpose to use the means which God putteth into our hands for the obtaining of it; or to seek any good from God (especially any special mercy) without a sincere intention to serve and glorifie him, if we obtain it from him, is no less than (in a sort) to mock God. Vid. *Ames* Cas. c. 16. lib. 4. quest. 2.

As for the latter more express and solemn Vowing, though so serious a thing be to be done with all good advice, and in matters of greater moment; yet that it is lawful, and sometimes expedient, and that we cannot do better than put such a Bridle upon our selves to restrain us from those un-approved things unto which our natures are fiercely carried, this, I say, is ackowledged *. Now why it should not be required of us also, when, in true judgment, conscience and experience, we find the need of it, and that our weakness exacteth it

* *Rivet* Explic. Decal. p. 101. *Calv.* Instit. l. 4. c. 13. S. 5.

of

of us, I (for my part) do not ſee; yet, becauſe I would be far from impoſing any thing that God impoſeth not, I leave it to thoſe conſcientious Chriſtians to conſider of, that are under the convictions of the need they have of it, and the help they have by it.

That which remaineth, is, to anſwer divers Objections.

Obj. 1.] *The Old Teſtament gives a full liberty not to Vow*, Deut 23. 22. *And there is no mention of a Vow in the New Teſtament, ſave only of* Paul's, (Acts 18. 18. & 21. 23, 24, 26.) *which appertaineth to the Old-Teſtament-Service, and which he did undergo and yield to, not as required of God, but as willing to condeſcend to the Jews, in a thing wherein at that time there was an indifferency, for the winning of them the better to the Goſpel, by ſhewing his reſpect to the Law of which they were ſo zealous: What then is there in Scripture binding to Vowing?*

Anſw. 1. For the Old Teſtament, it was ſhewed before how often they entred into Covenant with God, which was (for ſubſtance) but a purſuance of

of their Circumcision-Covenant wherein they were all bound. As for *Psal.*76. 11. it hath been spoken to already. Now to that in *Deut.* 23. 22. *If thou shalt forbear to Vow, it shall be no sin to thee*; this Answer is given *: *It shall be no sin*, that is, not so great a sin to forbear Vowing as to break a Vow, as it is expounded, *Eccles.* 5. 5. And so it is like that, *John* 15. 22. otherwise, Negligence and Unthankfulness is sure sinful, *Luke* 17. 17, 18.

* So *Ainsworth* in Deut. 23. 22.

2. As to the New Testament, It's true; There is no express Precept for Vowing, but the Question is not of the Name, but of the thing; And so it is answered *, that for Moral Vows, they are contained in the Moral Law (as helps for the better performing of all the Duties thereof) which Law continuing in the New Testament, the necessary assistances to our obeying thereof are therein included. The principal part of *Jacobs* Vow (which he saw he needed and which God accepted and answered) was plainly Moral, *viz. then shall the Lord be my God*; and why we should not say so, and Vow so, upon a special mercy received or to be received,

* *Sharpii Curs. Theolog. De Vot. Quest.* 1. Col. 1932.

Who

Who can tell? As to Miniſterial Vows of this or that outward thing they are of an inferiour nature, and have been ſpoken to before, as things wherein there is a greater liberty, and yet from which (as the caſe may ſtand) we are not altogether ſet free.

Obj. 2.]*But why ſhould any Vow be made for the keeping of Gods Moral Commandments, when it is impoſſible for us to obſerve them?*

Anſw. 1. We ſee *David* Vowing that, *Pſal.* 119. 106.

* Inſtit. l. 4. c. 13. S. 6.

2. *Calvin* Anſwered * very remarkably, that ſuch Vows are made under and with reſpect unto the Covenant of grace, wherein is contained the aid of the Spirit of God for the keeping of all the Commandments of God acceptably; and alſo, remiſſion of ſins, when we cannot keep them perfectly. This may ſerve to anſwer what can be objected againſt our Baptiſmal Covenant (wherein all are required of God to ingage) which is to keep Gods holy Will and Commandments all our days; As alſo againſt the ſubſequent renewings of the ſaid Covenant.

Obj.

Obj. 3.] *But if all be vowed in Baptiſm, then the thing is done, What need any more? The repeating thereof may be counted ſuperfluous.*

Anſw. Not ſo; for though by that firſt Covenant, and by Gods Commands of Obedience in it, we be ſufficiently and *eminently* bound to our Duty, yet (in regard of our ſelves) we are not ſo *aſſiſtingly* obliged as we may be by our own additional ingagements; I do not mean that we can add unto, or augment the Divine Bond, but only that it is by our Vow more acknowledged of us, and by every new engagement, more faſtened upon us, and we gird cloſer to our ſelves the Lords Bond, which, without that, hangs looſer. If I conſider my ſelf, in regard of God giving ſuch and ſuch Precepts, then the matter ſtands thus; *He binds and I am bound:* But if I look on my ſelf with reſpect to my after-vowing to obſerve theſe Precepts, then the matter ſtands thus; *I am bound, and I alſo bind:* and ſo God may ſay, if I fail, not only I condemn thee out of my own mouth, having given thee a Law which thou haſt broken, but out of thine own mouth (O thou evil, and

unfaithful Servant) because thou didst resume that Law, and lay it down to thine own self and soul, and yet hast transgress'd it; as 1 *King.* 2. 42. *Thou saidst*, that is, thou closedst in it, which is done more by an after-vow.

Hence *Joshua* when the people were ready and resolute to ingage, saith, *Ye are Witnesses against your selves*, *Josh.* 24. 21, 22. to wit, in binding themselves to what God bound them; so that more weight lies upon us to keep us from lifting up our souls to vanity, and to restrain us from exorbitancy by our own engagements; and another Argument and Motive is added to our walking uprightly; In regard of our selves therefore, they are not superfluous; no more than it is that a Debtor reneweth his Bond, though he were bound as strongly in the old Bond as in the new; for by a new Writing and Sealing there's a new sense of his Debt, and instigation to the payment of it. And in regard of others, Vows of Thankfulness to God set before the eyes of Men, may confirm their Faith in regard of the Mercy for which we testifie our thankfulness, and may also be

for

for their imitation, and to teach them to glorifie God when they receive the like favours from him; Besides, that it is not to be forgotten that when Infants are baptized, they are not able to conceive of any Covenant; and therefore had need to have it taught them, and understandingly and voluntarily (perhaps many years after) to bind themselves in their own Persons to the performance of that Covenant, unto which notwithstanding they were bound when they were baptized.

Obj. 4.] *God loves willingness, and that which is done freely: now Vows bind, and take away freedom.*

Answ. The willingness and liberty that God likes, and that we should always retain, is a liberty that is opposed to constraint, 1 *Pet.* 5. 2.

Obj. *But the Apostle saith*, not of necessity, 2 Cor. 9. 7. *and Vowing lays a necessity, and leaves no liberty of* going back, Judg. 11. 35.

Answ. The necessity there spoken of,

is the ſame with conſtraint; for it is oppoſed to what a Man *purpoſeth in his heart*, that is, to what a Man chuſeth by his own free-will, upon ſome conſideration or other by which he is over-powered; Now, albeit when a Man hath Vowed, there is a neceſſity of payment (as of a Debt to which a Man hath willingly ingaged himſelf) yet there is not ſuch a neceſſity as wherein there is an enforcement; for it is ſuppoſed he is willing to pay that binds himſelf to pay; nay, it proves him the more willing; for therefore he binds himſelf, becauſe he is willing to do what he is in danger not to do unleſs he tie himſelf to do it. He that is unwilling to do a thing, muſt needs be more unwilling to bind himſelf to do it. We do good works willingly, and yet we are Debtors to the Spirit (*Rom.* 8. 22.) and ſo bound to do them neceſſarily. The neceſſity *of Debt*, is not againſt liberty, but *of coaction*. When it is ſaid (in the Original) ἀνάγκασον, *Neceſſitate them to come in*, *Luke* 14. 23. it implies not any violent conſtraint, but over-powering Reaſons and Convictions drawing in the Will: *Paul* ſaith, *A neceſſity is laid upon me*,

me, 1 *Cor.* 9. 16. and yet saith immediately after, *If I do this thing willingly, I have a reward*, *ver.* 18. else not, *if against my Will*; but howsoever, *a dispensation of the Gospel is committed to me*, that is, I lie under a necessitating dispensation. There is a necessity to serve God, and yet His service is perfect freedom, 2 *Cor.* 3. 17. And there is this difference between necessity and coaction, that the coaction is with grief, but the necessity if the Vow be well made (as *Jepthah*'s was not; and therefore required not performance but repentance; I say, the necessity) is undergone, by a good heart, with joy. Now, As for Ministerial Vows of external exercises or assistances, there's no necessity in regard of the matter of them, the thing being in it self free, but in regard of the Subject, there is a necessity of performance incumbent after the Vow made. And yet what was indifferent before, remains indifferent, even to him, *in regard of his judgment* (and therefore he may not condemn others if they do what he must not do, or do not what, by his Vow, he must do); only, *in regard of the use*, he lies under his voluntary Vow, and so

cannot take that liberty that another man may.

Obj. 5.] *He that vows, lays a ſnare for himſelf, and brings upon himſelf a double guilt, if he fail: the one, in that he doth not that which he conceives himſelf in duty bound to do; the other, in that he hath broken a Vow whereby he tied himſelf to do it.*

Anſw. 1. Every Man is to be ſo well adviſed before he enter into a Vow, as to ſee it to be a thing that will help him, not hamper him; and a Spur to prick and prompt him to his Duty, not a Sword to wound him.

2. The firſt of theſe Guilts, to wit, in that he doth not the Duty, (whereof he was convinced, and therefore Vowed) is not to be imputed to his Vow, but to his ſecurity and careleſsneſs in not doing his Duty, which is heightened indeed becauſe it continueth after a Vow.

3. It cannot be avoided but that in ſuch Caſes there will be a double Guilt, (which falleth out alſo in the Vow of Baptiſm to which we are all bound); But then, we muſt know that a thing good

good in it self and acceptable to God (as the Vow here supposed to be) and also which may be of excellent use *, is not to be condemned or laid aside, because of an evil that by accident adheres, or rather is fastened by our own fault and the tentation of the Devil to it. Things in themselves good are not to be laid aside, because of an accidental evil; for then even our eating and drinking must be let alone, or at least, Physick (which is more like Vowing) because there is an easie and frequent mis-acting therein: Rather therefore, when we fail in such a Case, there should be a double fault, a double acknowledgment, a double repentance, in which way a double pardon may be hoped for; and it may be better hoped for, because the fault is doubled by means of that Vow wherein we bound our selves out of a willingness to do the will of God.

* Utilitatem suam habent eximiam, quod nimirum hominis animum in bono confirmant, & à malè agendo nos cohibent, *Baldw.*. Cas. De Votis, p. 281.

4. It is here to be considered, that as there may be a Snare on the one hand, that is, in Vowing, so there lies also a Tentation on the other side, that is, in leaving a Mans self loose. To shun Covenants and Engagements, is a secret contributer to Security; for then the

idle heart is apt to say, If I go on as before, though I be defective in Duty (as all are) yet I do not add to it breach of Covenant; for I make none; as profane people use to say: Though I be loose and run out at times, yet I am no Hypocrite; for I make no such Profession as they do: But such may know that it is the mark of a dishoneſt Man, to be loth to renew his Bond, because thereby he knows he shall be tied more than before, and if he break, be more blamed. Creditors like those Men better that are ready to renew their Bonds, though they fail after, because it shews a good nature, an honest mind, and a willingness to pay if they were able. Nor is it in vain to Vow though we fail; for even because of that failing a gracious person is so ashamed and confounded *, that he doth at last set himself to do what he hath Vowed to do with a greater confirmation of mind, and so makes good his Vow at last, the rather because he hath not made it good before; as he that hath often promised to pay a Debt and failed, even for very shame pays at last.

* The breach of our Vow will so pierce our hearts, as to fortifie us against new Assaults. *Dod* Serm. on *Pro.*28.13.

Obj.

Obj. 6.] *If it be required of God to make a Vow about things indifferent, then it is a sin not to make it; But who will say, it is a sin, not to Vow to abstain from such Meat or Drink, or not to Vow, after the receiving of a special mercy, to give, in way of thankfulness, such or such a portion to the Poor, or good uses?*

Answ. It's true, that things indifferent (as indifferent) are not the proper matter of a Vow, but only as they are a needful and an apt assistance for the doing of that which is not indifferent, but required of God as a Christians Duty. Such Vows are not made by the necessity of any Precept, in regard of the things themselves, but upon a supposed necessity of them as a means (to such or such a person) for the accomplishing of that Moral End for which they are intended and entred into. We cannot say, it is necessary to Vow an abstaining from the use of Wine, or the giving of such a sum of Money to good uses, or that it is a sin if the one or the other be not done; but we may and must say that Temperance is necessary; and

and real Thankfulneſs is neceſſary; and therefore, ſuppoſing a man to be convinced within himſelf that he cannot attain the temperance, or ſhall fail in the thankfulneſs without tying himſelf to ſuch means and helps, I cannot ſee (and yet I ſpeak with ſubmiſſion, in a thing wherein others are ſo ſhie) but that in ſuch a caſe it will prove a ſin to ſuch a man to forbear ſuch a means to him neceſſary for the accompliſhing of ſuch Ends; for, Is it not a ſin in a Man not to reſpect as he ought God's Ends, and conſequently, not to uſe all thoſe good means that God hath put into his hands to ſerve God better, and give God what he requires of him, eſpecially if he and others have found by experience the benefit of ſuch a courſe?

Vid. *Chemnit.* p. 3. c. 6. exam. Concil: Trid. p: 30. & cap: 7. p. 31.

The ground of this Vowing is, the mutability and inconſtancy of the will of Man in better and harder things, which therefore needs a peculiar and ſtrait Bond to keep it firm. It's uſual with us in our ſtraits to be ſtrait with our ſelves, and to entertain divers holy and ſelf-denying purpoſes; but being ſet free from trouble, we grow remiſs, ſecure (like *Lot*'s Wife) look back to what

what we like: Now for the preventing of this security, a Vow is of great use (yea, in those things wherein we are bound before by the command of God) because thereby, which way soever we go, we carry about with us, a commonefaction and spiritual munition in our consciences to arm us against the evil and violent inclinations of the flesh, the instigations of Satan, and those affected pretences that are apt to arise in our corrupt hearts, to make a looser way look well enough. Mr. *Dod** well observes, that the true reason why Satan is so violent in tempting, and we so weak in resisting, is, because we hang off, halt between two opinions, and have faint resolutions of forsaking sin; and therefore (saith he) if no better means will serve the turn, we must bind our selves by a solemn Vow and Covenant to labour and strive against our principal and most dangerous corruptions. Much hath been spoken of the lawfulness and expediency of a *Vow*, how it is continued and how far it may be urged in the new Testament, whereunto, since this Subject is already so far prosecuted, some other things may be more distinctly and succinctly annexed,

* Ubi supra.

nexed, that the whole Argument may be better comprehended.

The First Enquiry.

Quest. *What is a* Vow, *and how distinguished?*

Answ. A *Vow* is a voluntary and serious Promise made unto God, with a solemn engaging and binding our selves to him, to do what we have promised in his presence.

There are many other Descriptions, but they are rather of a right and regulated Vow, than of a Vow; yet *Jephthah*'s Vow is called a Vow.

Now for this Description. It's true, that a *Vow* lies essentially and fundamentally in the purpose of the heart represented before God; but yet a *single purpose*, without a promise, is distinguished from a *Vow*, because every Vow hath a Bond in it. There may be a *purpose* of heart presented before God, and that with a mind to perform it; but if there be not a will * and intention to oblige our selves unto God for the performance thereof, it doth not bind as a *Vow* doth.

* Latinè *Votum* à Voluntate dicitur, quia à deliberatione proficiscitur. *Scharp.*

This Vow and Promise is to be made not to Saints or Angels, but to God, whose interest is concerned in it, who alone

lone knows the heart where the Vow is bottomed, and to whom it properly belongeth to puniſh all thoſe whoever they be that deal falſly in their Vow and Covenant; See *Deut.* 23. 21.

And what an engaging of our ſelves there ſhould be to perform when and what we have once Vowed, we may ſee in *David*, *Pſal.* 119.106. and in *Hannah*, 1 *Sam.* 1. 28.

This Vow may be made either in expreſs words, or in the mind only if it be ſuppoſed to be done with a mind to bind; For as to God, who is the Searcher of all hearts, it's all one * whether the tongue ſpeak, or the heart only; as we may collect from *Hannah*'s ſpeaking in her heart, wherein, when ſhe Vowed, the work was at leaſt, moſt and principally, and for the ſubſtance done, 1 *Sam.* 1. 11, 13.

* *Rivet.* Explic. Decal. p. 103. *Polan.* Syntagm. p. 632.

Now, A *Vow*, as to the diſtinction thereof, is,

1. *Common* and Univerſal of all the People of God, made firſt in the Sacrament of initiation, which is now the Sacrament of *Baptiſm*, (for albeit Infants cannot then make it themſelves, yet it is made for themſelves, ſo as that when

when they come to age, they are by that transaction bound to perform it); And this Vow is renewed in the Sacrament of Confirmation, that is, of the *Lords Supper*, in a special manner; for it may, and is to be done otherwise also.

2. *Singular*, of this and that Man voluntarily and occasionally binding himself (whereof the former Description is given).

And this is twofold also.

1. *More General*], when a Man, upon this or that special and weighty occasion or reason, ties himself in the presence of God to do those things that are required of him, and imposed on him by the Word of God, as *Jacob* and *David* did, *Gen.* 28. 21. *Psal.* 101. 2, 3. (see the Contents) & *Psal.* 119. 106.

2. *More Special*], which is not a Moral Vow, (as the former was) for the performing of any thing commanded, but it is (as hath been said) a Ministerial Vow, subservient to the Moral, and may be described to be, a voluntary ingaging of our selves to some outward work in it self not required, but useful to us that that which is a worship of God, may be better performed; or, It

is

is a Vowing of an arbitrary and indifferent thing for a Moral End.

The Second Enquiry.

Queſt. *What then are the Ends and Reaſons of a* Vow?

Anſw. They are ſuch as theſe.

1. To aſſiſt us in our Obedience (our doing of good or forbearing of evil) in in thoſe things wherein we find it moſt difficult: As ſuppoſe, a Man find himſelf very averſe and ſhifting from ſelf-examination, and that required ſaying, *What have I done? Jer.* 8. 6. it may give him juſt reaſon to tie himſelf to ſome times of Humiliation, (as once a month, or ſtill, before the Sacrament) that the Duty of Repentance may not be quite thruſt out of doors, while it is (from time to time) thruſt into Corners, and though it be not denied yet it is ſtill delayed and omitted: Accordingly, there may be juſt cauſe to bind ones ſelf, even by Vow, to ſet times apart for reading Scripture and Prayer, leſt otherwiſe we be ſtrangers to our Bible and to our God. So, if a Man be given to his appetite, and hath found himſelf often to offend, and to offend his Conſcience that way; or that ſuch Meats and Drinks

(as

(as Wine) have been unto him, grievous provocations to ſin; or that he hath been therein often caught by ſuch and ſuch tempting Company; Here a good ground is laid of laying, by Vow (in regard of ſuch Things and Perſons) a reſtraint upon himſelf, that he may not for want of faſting, (*Numb.* 30. 15. 1 *Cor.* 9. 27. *Jer.* 35. 6.) or binding out himſelf from what is pleaſing, but not neceſſary, lie in that ſin which it is neceſſary, by all good means, to rid our ſelves of. Unto this Head the Vow of the *Nazarites* heretofore may be refer'd, wherein Holineſs and a ſpecial ſeparation of themſelves from all worldly pleaſures and the ordinary delights of other Men unto the Lord, *Numb.* 6. 2, 5. was intended and kept ſtrictly to, for the time of their Vow; whereupon they were highly eſteemed, *Lam.* 4. 7. and the people were or might be, happy in them, becauſe they were Patterns of holineſs, *Amos* 2. 11. Now the Rule of theſe external and auxiliary things, is, that they muſt not be Vowed abſolutely, and in a ſeparation from their End (as if Religion were to be placed in obſerving this or that day, in abſtaining from this

this or that Meat, or that any thing were merited by these observances), I say, they are not to be Vowed absolutely as if there were any necessity, or holiness in the observance, but relatively, as they are helps of obedience.

2. To assist us in our Prayers, and comfort our hearts in the time of great Affliction, as *Jacob* vowed, and *Jephthah*, and *Hannah*, partly at least, to strengthen their Faith in Prayer, (unto which something hath been spoken before *), it confirmeth the heart much in expecting good from God, when there is a declaration of our good affections to him, and that he shall be a gainer, (if we may speak after the manner of Men) in his glory by granting those things which make for our comfort.

* See before, p. 115, 116.

3. To assist us in our thanksgiving *, *Psal.* 50. 14. which appeareth to be more real, if we do not only offer the Sacrifice of praise unto God, and the Calves of our lips, but also do good, and distribute, considering how pleasing to God that is, *Heb.* 13. 15, 16. Thus God had not only a Song from *Hannah*, but a (Vowed) Son, 1 *Sam.* 1. 11, 27, 28. & 2. 1, 11.

* Sic intelligendi sunt omnes loci in Psalmis, qui de Votis loquuntur, *Calv.* Instit. ubi supra.

4. To assist us in our Charity, whether in respect of our Brethrens spiritual edifica-

fication, 1 *Cor.* 9. 20. (which was the thing that *Paul* intended in that Vow, *Acts* 18. 18. as he did also in the circumciling of *Timothy*), or whether it respect their bodily relief; in which regard a Man may Vow to lay aside so much when the Lord prospereth him, and there is a time of greater gain, for the maintenance of the Ministry and the use of the Poor *; or to lay aside a little weekly, because otherwise that will come heavily from us, which in that way (it being dedicated to God aforehand) we shall far more freely and chearfully communicate, 1 *Cor.* 16. 1, 2.

* Gen. 28. last.

The Third Enquiry.

Quest. *In what manner are we to Vow, or what Considerations and Conditions are to be had, and observed in Vowing?*

Answ. 1. We must Vow nothing but what is possible and feasible]. Not to keep all Gods Commandments perfectly, as if we were in a state of innocency, when now the Law is too weak to save us, because we are too weak to keep it, *Rom.* 8. 3. or, when we have been once angry, never to be inordinately angry again; for the best Men will still be subject to the like passions with other Men, *Jam.* 5. 17. *Acts* 15. 39. (though they be not passionate alike) but that which we

we do ingage into (if we vow wisely) is, a sincere care, and diligent endeavour (according to the strength God shall give (which we are to beg of him,) and with a due consideration and sence of the infirmity under which we labour and groan) to observe all that God requireth of us, that is, without partiality, though not without imperfection, and to keep our selves from our iniquity, really and without guile, though it may so fall out that we shall be foil'd against our will, and to our grief; and in that case it must be with rallying again, and renewing the Fight against those Lusts that fight against our God and our Souls, and our Vows.

2. It must be what is lawful]; Not (as they Vowed, *Acts* 23. 12.) to kill *Paul*; so *Judges* 17. 3. Nothing must be Vowed against Gods Word; for that's to bind our selves to a sin, *John* 3.4. Nor which is inconsistent with our Callings, as for a Man to Vow himself into a private life when he is called to be a Magistrate, or upon some colour of piety, or to pursue some self-pleasing design, to forsake Wife and Children whom he is called to take care of. Nor which is against Charity, as that rigid Oath of *Saul* was,

1 *Sam.* 14. 24, 29. Especially, against Gods honour, *Deut.* 23. 18.

3. It must be of things in our power, that is, which we may attain (in ordinary course) by the diligent use of the means, and the blessing of God thereupon. If a Man should Vow a single life all his life, when, though he have the gift of Continency now, yet he knows not how long he shall have it, may make his single life become a very sinful life; unto which it may be added, that, as the things, so the Persons that Vow, must be in their own power. There must not only be a freedom of Will and Election in those that Vow, but a freedom of Condition *. For Children living with their Parents, to Vow Marriage with such or such against or without their Parents consent, is to do that which they have a will to do, but not which they have a power to do: for they are under the power of their Parents, to whom it belongs (as the Scripture * still speaks) to *give* them in Marriage. And they do much worse that suffer themselves to be drawn into a Vow, and withdrawn from their Parents by Popish Seducers.

* *Rivet.* ex. Num. 30.

* Deut. 7. 3. Gen. 38. 26

There's enough in this and the former Rule against Romish Vows, they being against

againſt the Word of God; Namely,

1. The Vow of voluntary Poverty, whereby, leaving the property they have in their goods, they bind themſelves to live by begging, *Deut.* 15. 4. which is againſt *Agurs* Prayer, *Prov.* 30. 8, 9. and a thing whereby they put themſelves upon that tentation which *Agur* therein expreſſeth.

2. The Vow of perpetual Chaſtity, which is againſt that Scripture, 1 *Cor.*7.9. How few are there in whom thoſe burnings are not, though in different degrees and at different times? In which regard for a Man to bind out himſelf from Gods Remedy, What is it but to tempt God?

3. The Vow of regular Obedience, directly againſt that Scripture, *Ye are bought with a price: be not the ſervants of men*, 1 *Cor.* 7.23. for in that Vow they bind themſelves, even in the things belonging to the worſhip of God, to be obedient to their Superiours Will; yea, to eat, drink, ſleep, be apparelled, according to a Rule given them, wherein *Luther* relates that in his time there was ſuch rigor, that if a little Fleſh would ſave his life that was tied to Fiſh, he muſt not take it; and that he ſaw many, ſtrong for their age, yet ſo extremely pale and weak (walking with

a Staff to ſuſtain themſelves) that he wondred at it, and asked them how it came to paſs that they were ſo wan and weak; They anſwered, by their Watching. And why (ſaith he) Do you not Sleep then? Their anſwer was this, It is not permitted to us to do ſo. *Luther* in *Gen.* 13. 9.

And beſides this unlawfulneſs, they conſider not how little power they have to bear what they bind themſelves unto; which alſo adds to the unlawfulneſs.

4. We ſhould bind our ſelves by a Vow then only when it is truly needful for us, and in ſuch things as wherein we ſee juſt and great cauſe to lay a willing conſtraint upon our ſelves for God, and our Souls good; For (as hath been ſaid) a Vow in external things is grounded very much upon a conviction within our ſelves, that, howſoever others may do well without it (and therefore are not bound as we are to it), yet we cannot want it without being wanting in the Duty we owe unto God, unto which we are bound and præobliged by our Moral Vow alſo: We are not to make Vows trivial things, but to uſe the higheſt Medicines in the higheſt Maladies.

5. Vows muſt be very deliberate, not raſh,

raſh, as they that Vow they will never go into ſuch an Houſe again, nor into ſuch Company; They will ſwear away their Healthing and Gaming, but it is all in paſſion, perhaps in an Ale-houſe, not as in Gods Preſence; it is while they feel the ſmart of theſe things, and ſo a new tentation carries them to their old courſe, *Prov.* 23. 25. whereas *every* prudent *purpoſe is eſtabliſhed by counſel*, *Prov.* 20. 18. and Men ſhould make a Vow (which is not like to be made good without fighting) as they make War, that is, *with good advice*. It's a condemned thing to be like that headlong *Herod*, that ſuddenly and wantonly bound himſelf to give any thing that a Dancing-Damoſel would ask, and ſo to do that which was highly againſt God's Law, and ſadly againſt his own Conſcience, *Mark* 6. 22, 25, 26. Or, to be like *Saul*, who, in all haſte, brake off from his enquiring of God, and bound the People under a Curſe to eat no Food till the Evening; which was not only againſt Charity (as was obſerved before) but againſt wiſdom and all good advice; for the matter of the Oath hindred the end of the Oath, to wit, a greater ſlaughter of the *Philiſtins*, 1 *Sam.* 14. 24, 30. At leaſt, it is (or may be)

to be like *Jepthah*, that by his more zealous than adviſed Vow, brought himſelf into a Snare, and which (as it is obſerved out of *Juſtin Martyr* *) God ſuffered him to fulfil, that Men might have an example to warn them never to make a Vow to God indefinitely *, and in ſuch a latitude that they bind themſelves to they know not what.

*Per *Areſ.* Loc. 114. de Votis.

* ἀορίστως.

We are therefore to caſt perils beforehand, both in regard of the difficulty of the thing we would bind our ſelves to, *Joſh.* 24. 19. and in regard of the infirmity of Humane nature; for though the Spirit (in a day of Solemn Humiliation eſpecially) be willing of any good thing, yet the Fleſh is weak, *Mat.* 26. 41. And hereupon to enter upon ſuch an action and obligation, with much humility and ſenſe of the need of the Lord's going along with us in it, *John* 15. 5. *Judges* 5. 8. as alſo, with *David*'s Prayer, 1 *Chron.* 29. 18. not with *Peter*'s Preſumption, *Mat.* 26. 35. And with Faith alſo; for our own beſt reſolutions are but like *Saul*'s Armour to *David*: we muſt ſet about ſuch a buſineſs (as he did) *in the Name of the Lord.* It's an holy and hopeful thing to ſay, O Lord, I Vow, becauſe I would not *let ſin have dominion*; and there-

therefore, Lord, perform thy Promiſe, wherein thou haſt ſaid, *Sin ſhall not have dominion*, *Rom.* 6. 12, 16.

Obj. *If the Caſe be ſo, and there muſt be ſo much ado, then it is good not to Vow at all, as* Mat. 19. 10.

Anſw. That doth not follow, any more than that did which the Diſciples ſpake concerning Marriage; for as all cannot be without the help of Marriage, *Mat.* 19. 11. ſo neither can ſome live ſo religiouſly and holily without the help of a Vow: But that which followeth is only this; therefore we ſhould not vow raſhly at all; wherein *Calvin* ſpeaks very ſolidly, when he ſaith, That nothing is more adviſeable than to be very ſparing in Vowing, becauſe they that Vow with levity, do either quickly repent of their Vow, or elſe undergo it with ſuch ſervility as is in them that do things by force; and if they pay and perform their hard task, it is with much trouble and tediouſneſs, whereby the buſineſs is mar'd, and loſeth all its grace and beauty. *Calv.* in *Deut.* 23. 22.

Let all Chriſtians therefore be very obſervant how they Vow, that they may not entangle themſelves, and yet not omit that conſiderate Vowing by which they may ſo advantage themſelves; And

let

let them Remember, that they may Vow divers things profitably, wherein there is not such a difficulty and hard Discipline as in some other things there is. This will appear if we review and imitate *Jacob*'s Vow; Who saith,

1. *Then shall the Lord be my God*], Vow thou so too, upon the obtaining of a singular and signal Mercy to serve the Lord only, to cleave unto him firmly, to walk before him circumspectly, and more exactly by the help of his grace.

2. *I'll make him an Altar*], I Vow to have Prayer in my Family, and to set apart some time for private Prayer.

3. As *Jacob* Vowed *the Tenth*, so mayst thou, I will give the Lord a part of my Goods, consecrate such a Sum to him, *lay by me in store* * something for him, and for his poor Servants. All this is something, and yet no more than what may be done chearfully; yea, with much more chearfulness and comfort of Conscience, than if it were let alone.

* 1 Cor. 16.2.

Now indeed, the Vowing against a special and natural corruption, is another matter. If we have faln once and again into such evils, we may not Vow never to be overtaken more; for sin we shall while we are here; and if any sin over-

come

come us, it will be our natural and constitution-sin: but we may Vow, not to give way to it for the natural pleasure that there is in it, or out of diffidence or distrust of the power of God for getting the better of it, or as, lying down in despair, because of such *Goliab*'s: we may also Vow, carefully and watchfully to avoid the occasions that may (with attending on our Calling) be avoided, of falling into them; (as *Joseph* would not be with her, *Gen.* 39. 10. and yet went into the House to do his business, *v.* 11.) as also, to use all good means to keep our selves from our iniquity. It's but a folly for a Man to Vow he will never be overcome by a powerful Enemy; but yet to use all good means not to be overcome, that he may, and usually Men do resolve upon; so here, if such company, meats, drinks, dalliances, compliances, give strength to a Master-sin, and make it more Master; all such things one may zealously (and yet cautelously) Vow against: And, let this be the caution; Try for a time (as the *Nazarites* Vow was temporary), as, for a week, a month, a quarter; and in such a measure, (not the highest and hardest degrees at first). Thus by disusing, thou mayst by little and little (and so more

and

and more) wean thy self from, and give a Bill of divorce unto those things that hurt thee and hold thee, and which thou hast been longer (as it were) married unto. Thus People by keeping away one from another a week, a month, a year, at length grow out of all acquaintance, and can live one without another well enough.

Unto this Fifth Caution (which being so manifold) hath detained me thus long), I add,

6. That a Vow must be free, that is, (as to these auxiliary and external engagements) Christian liberty must still be preserved, and the Vow must be made and continued according to the reason and occasion whereupon it is grounded. To Vow abstinence from Wine and strong Drink for ever, is to lay a Snare to catch a Mans self in; Age, or incidental Weakness may as much need it, and be enliven'd by it as Youth was defiled by it; yea, a young *Timothy* may be so weak, as that *Paul* will be so far from wishing him to make a Vow against Wine, because of his youth, that he admonisheth and adviseth him to the moderate use of it, because of his weakness.

The Fouth Enquiry.

Quest. *What Rules and Helps are there for,*

for, and Reaſons of the ſtrict performance of Vows being once made?

Anſw. 1. If Vows be made unlawfully and raſhly, they bind indeed, But to what? To Repentance (as was ſaid before of *Jepthah's* Vow) not to performance; we muſt not make Laws to our ſelves againſt Gods Laws: If a Father or an Husband might make Vows of none effect, (*Numb.* 30.) How much more God? It's a ſad thing for Chriſtians to make ſuch Vows as they cannot with any comfort keep or break; Not keep, becauſe they be raſh; not break, becauſe they be Vows; like Children, that out of fear, promiſe what you will. Men that over-vow, are like Men that over-purchaſe themſelves, whereby they grow miſerably in Debt, and (haply) are forced to ſell the Land again to pay the Debt. So inconſiderate Vowers are miſerably troubled, finding it impoſſible to perform, and being therefore forced even to unpromiſe again (though it be as diſmal as to part with purchaſed Land) that they may have ſome peace (by Gods mercy pardoning their raſhneſs upon repentance) in withdrawing from their Vow, who could have no peace under the obligation. Men may quickly make

ſuch

ſuch Vows as no honeſt and wiſe Chriſtian will be their ſurety for the payment of. How many ſhew zeal in Vowing, and then grow wiſe after when they come to performing? When on the contrary, Wiſdom ſhould be put to making of our Vows and Promiſes, and Zeal to the Performance.

But though, in ſome Caſes we may be prohibited, and in other Caſes diſabled to do what we have Vowed, whereupon an impediment will be put to the performance; yet ſuch is the reverence of a Vow, and ſo ſcandalous the breach (if it be publick) among Men, and ſo diſhonourable to God, to play faſt and looſe with him, that, though it be not made ſo adviſedly as it ſhould be, yet carnal difficulties, worldly diſcommodities, private and perſonal diſſatisfactions ſhould not beat us off from the performance of it, becauſe they will not bear us out in it, *Pſal.* 15. 4. *Judg.* 11. 35, 36.

2. If they be lawful and holy Vows, wherein we bind our ſelves to things pleaſing to God, and helpful to godlineſs, then we may ſay with *Jepthah*, *I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back*, *Judg.* 11. 35. In this the Scripture is very expreſs, *Deut.* 23. 21, 23. And,

And in particular, in this Text, *Eccleſ.* 5. 4, 5, 6. So *Pſal.* 76. 11.

And hereof there are theſe Reaſons.

1. Becauſe Religion being it ſelf a Bond; a Vow is the Bond of that Religion; ſo that though the thing Vowed were a thing free before the Vow, yet it becomes a matter of Religion to do what is vowed when it is vowed. The matter of a Vow, that is, the thing which is vowed, may be, in it ſelf, indifferent; but a Vow (as a Vow) and in the formality of it, appertains to the Worſhip of God. He that Vows againſt drinking Wine for ſuch a time, doth not worſhip God *immediately* in forbearing to drink Wine; but yet he worſhips God in that abſtaining *by accident*, becauſe he ſtands bound under the Religion of a Vow, and for the honour of that God to whom the Vow is made, ſo to do; which will further appear in the next Reaſon. Vid. *Rivet.* & *Ames* Caſ. ut ſupra.

2. Becauſe God owns the thing vowed], *Acts* 5. 4. *Was it not thine own? ... in thine own power?* But it was not ſo after he had ſold the Land, and brought the Money to God, and devoted it to him as the whole of that Money he ſold his Land for. So *Pſal.* 56. 12. *Thy Vows are upon me, O God*: Not that God makes Vows,

Vows, but they are God's when we have made them before him and to him. This even Heathens saw by their Light; and therefore accounted them that had Vowed guilty of their Vow till they had paid it, and that they lay damned of that Vow, and as Persons condemned under it and by it, if they neglected to pay it.

Damnabis tu quoq; votis. *Virgil.* Eclog. 8.

3. Because the breaking of a Vow contains many sad and shameful things in it: As 1. Foolery and mockery, *Eccles.* 5. 4. and Vanity, *ver.* 7. 2. Flattery and hypocrisie, *Hos.* 6. 4. *Psal.* 78. 33, 34, 35, 36. and so the losing of ones credit with God, *Psal.* 78. 8, 9. 10. *v.* 37. 3. Perfidiousness, because a Solemn Covenant is broken. 4. Profaneness, because it is made in the Presence, and unto the Majesty of God, and yet is broken and sleighted, *Eccles.* 5. 6. *Gal.* 6. 7. 5. Want of the fear of God, *Eccles.* 5. 7. 6. It makes God to blast a Mans Enterprizes, and *destroy the work of his hands*, because of the errour of his Voice, *Eccles.* 5. 6. Behold how fearful the consequences of this fickleness are, *Jer.* 34. 16, 17. Any thing will serve to witness for God against such Men, *Josh.* 24. 27.

ee *Moller* n Psal. 66. 13.

Mercator quidam mortuus concidit, Quest. 30. Libras quas pauperibus legaverat ægrotus reddere recusavit à Morbo liberatus.

Quest.

Queſt. *In what manner is a Vow to be performed?*

Anſw. 1. Wholly], Not as Monks, that perform their Vow in not-marrying, but therefore are the more unchaſt, and live in all impurity.

2. Speedily, *Deut.* 23. 21. He gives twice that gives quickly.

3. Freely and chearfully], Praiſes ſhould be as ready and as hearty as the Prayers that were made when the Vow was made; and therefore *Muſculus* * upon this occaſion, blames them that when they be ſick, deſire publick Prayers, and yet take no care to have publick Thanks returned to God when they are recovered: The real acknowledgment alſo of their thankfulneſs ſhould be freely rendred, as we ſee in *Hannah*, 1 *Sam.* 1. 27. for *God loves a chearful giver.* And therefore there ſhould be providence in Vowing, that the performance may not come with an *Alas*, as it did from *Jepthah*, *Judges* 11. 35.

* Loc. Com. De Votis; Preces noſtræ dum ægrotamus non ſunt Votivæ, ideoq; ſanitati reſtituti, nullam Voti reddition proponimus neq; per nos, neq; per aliquem publicum Miniſtrum Eccleſiæ.

Queſt. *What Helps be there for the performing of what is vowed rightly, though performed hardly?*

Anſw. 1. Part with thy Luſts], As People go to Fairs and Markets, and there ſell what they are loth enough to part

with, that they may pay what they owe; so Go to the means of Grace; Perhaps, the Minister may bid so fair *, as that thou wilt part with those corruptions that hinder the performance of thy Vows. If it were so, and corruptions were once mortified, How easily would Vows be performed?

*See *Ezra* 10. 2, 10, 11, 12. Hope of good, fear of evil prevailed to make them return to their old Covenant-Command, *Ezra* 9.10, 11. And to keep their new Covenant: An *Ezra* may do much.

2. Borrow of Friends and Neighbours], so People use to do that they may not disappoint their Creditors, and make forfeits to their Landlords; converse with godly Christians that are honest themselves in their dealing with God, and would have all others to be so also. And let all Christians lend what help they can, that their Fellow-Christians may pay their Vows. Abhorred be they that give the *Nazarites* Wine to drink, *Amos* 2. 12, and entice others to do contrary to their Vows and Engagements; They be like the Devil, *Acts* 5. 3. *Gen.* 3. 4, 5.

3. Abate from ordinary Delights]; for that's needful for the performing of extraordinary Engagements. As those that have an hard Fine to pay, abate for a time, in dyet, apparel, and other (not-necessary) Expences; so must they that make strict Vows, and mean to pay them, from

from carnal contentments, as from Revels, Feasts, or put *a Knife to their Throat* if they be there, and be *given to appetite*, *Prov.* 23. 2. so, if given to anger, rather forbear good than speak evil, *Psal.* 39. 2. O How did *David*'s Light and holy Understanding overcome his longing! 2 *Sam.* 23. 16, 17. So did the *Rechabites* obedience their natural content: which obedience to their Father, God did highly commend and reward, *Jer.* 35. 14, 18, 19.

4. Pray earnestly to God, that strength may be given from him for the performing of that Vow, (howbeit hard to flesh and blood) that was made not only before him, but for him, 1 *Kings* 8. 57, 58. 1 *Chron.* 29. 18.

This is honestly to keep thy word: and this will be thy comfort, as it is to a Man when his great Fine is paid, though he have pinch'd to pay it.

Obj. *Oh, but I have broken Vows!*

Answ. If wilfully, it is a fearful sin, *Isa.* 24. 5. but yet not unpardonable; for God pardons iniquity, transgression and sin, that is, sins of all sorts and degrees; If weakly, God is merciful; for

even Men are ſo in this Caſe; when a Man out of an honeſt mind willing to pay, binds himſelf firmly to pay at ſuch a time, yet is not able by all the ſhift he can make to do it: Here the Creditor blames his inconſiderateneſs (perhaps) in making him believe he would pay and yet diſappointing him, but he paſſeth it over for all that, and loveth to ſee ſuch a diſpoſition to diſcharge a Debt, and ſaith, I ſee, this poor Man is as willing to pay as to promiſe if he were able; I take that well, and paſs by his Non-performance now; He will pay when he hath it: even ſo, he will ſpeed well with God that can ſay, truly, Lord, thou knoweſt I I would pay if I had it, and will pay, if I can get wherewithal to do it.

Scrip-

Scripture-Queſtions out of *Iſaiah.*

Iſa. 9. 6, 7.

For unto us a Child is born, and unto us a Son is given, and the Government ſhall be on his ſhoulders; and his Name ſhall be called Wonderful, Counſeller,, The mighty God, The everlaſting Father, The Prince of Peace, &c.

Qu. *WHat's the reaſon why Chriſt is ſo often mentioned in the Promiſes of the Old Teſtament, and Prophecies of the outward deliverances of the Church?*

Anſw. 1. In general]. 1. Becauſe without Chriſt, it is impoſſible any good ſhould be vouchſafed to us; For, ſince the Fall of Man, our ſtate is ſum'd up in this, *God againſt us*; for that's the fruit of ſin, *Jer.* 21. 13. *Zech.* 11. 8. *Rom.* 5. 10. only in Chriſt, there is again, *God with us, Iſa.* 8. 8, 10. & 41. 10.

2. Becauſe in and through Chriſt all good is given out from God unto us, 1 *Cor.* 3. 21, 22, 23. *Rom.* 8. 32.

In particular], That this may appear ſo to be, Chriſt is here ſet forth, in his Perſon and Office; and that as both of them make for his Peoples good.

1. *In his Perſon*]; For Behold here, It is ſaid,

1. *A Child is born*], There's Chriſts Humanity; for He was *Marie's* Child, *Mat.* 2. 20. that is, of her ſubſtance, though conceived by the power of the Holy Ghoſt; He was alſo fed and bred up with Butter and Honey, as other Children us'd to be in that Land that flowed with Milk and Honey, *Iſa.* 7. 14, 15. This Child (like the Youth or Child) *David*, 1 *Sam.* 17. 33, 42. maſters and deſtroys all the *Goliah*-like Enemies of the Church.

2. *A Son is given*], There's his Divinity, *Luke* 1. 35. which they that had eyes ſaw well enough, *John* 1. 14. The *Child is born*, but the *Son*, that is, Chriſt (as the Son of God) is not born but *given*; yet it's true that that *holy thing* that was born of *Mary* is truly called *the Son of God*, *Luke* 1. 35. that being ordinarily aſcribed to the Perſon that properly belongs to either nature, ſo *that holy thing*,

thing, is that holy Person, said to be born of *Mary*, because (as Man) he was so, but (as God) he was given not born; And when God gave him forth unto us, it is under this Name, *The Son of God*, *Psal.* 2. 7. *Heb.* 1. 5.

3. A Child is born, and a Son is given, *to us.* There's our felicity; for *God gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life*, *John* 3. 16. This shews what's meant by this [Us], that is, all Believers, whether before or after Christ, and whether they be Jews or Gentiles, *Acts* 15. 11. *Luke* 2. 10, 11.

O How many be there that believe there is a God, but not that he is a Father *to them?* that there is a Christ, but cannot say or shew that he is given *to them?* Happy that Man that can say in the presence of Christ, *My Lord and my God*, *John* 20. 28. and that Woman that can say and sing in the presence of God, *My Spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour*, *Luke* 1. 47.

2. Christ is here set forth *In his Office*]. The government of all *, especially of the Church is *upon his shoulder*; He hath the Keys to lock and unlock, do and undoe as he pleaseth, *Isa.* 22. 22. *Rev.* 1. 18. * Mat. 28. 18. Joh. 5. 22.

& 3. 7. He hath no such yoke or staff as is an instrument of oppression (as *Isa.* 9. 4.) but a Key and Ensign of Rule and Domination; and under this great work and weight of Government he puts his own shoulder; Albeit he use Instruments, *Prov.* 8. 15, 16. yet he is no *non-resident*, He sees, oversees, and perfectly orders all himself.

Unto both these is adjoined for the Churches further consolation and confirmation, a fuller description of Christs Person and Government.

1. Of his Person], which well followeth upon the mention of his Government, because it shews how excellently and abundantly he is qualified for the managing of it. But it is also of general use; For, As God set his Name [Almighty] before *Abraham* to assure him of all covenanted mercy; and as he did more largely spread his Name before *Moses* to set forth the goodness and the glories of his Nature; and both in reference to, and for the behoof of his Church: So here, the Name of Christ is *like Ointment poured forth*, *Cant.* 1. 3. and his several Attributes reckoned up to ascertain the Church of all desirable things in and by him.

He

He is therefore said to be,

1. *Wonderful*], Not only in his Person (a Child in a Manger, and yet God; God, and yet lying in a Manger, *Luke* 2.12,18.) Nor only in his Wisdom and Understanding, *Luke* 2. 47. and in his Preaching, *Luke* 4.22. *John* 2.46. Nor only in his miraculous Works, *Luke* 9.43. but especially in regard of the gathering, governing and protecting of his Kingdom and Subjects, *John* 14. 12. in relation whereunto, strange things have been, are, and will be done in the World, *Psal.* 77. 13, 14, 15, 16. with *Mica.* 7. 15. *Zech.* 8. 6. especially, the work of Redemption is fill'd with Wonders, *Ephes.* 3. 9, 10. 1 *Tim.* 3. 16.

2. *Counseller*], *Isa.* 11. 2. Not only because he is acquainted with his Fathers Counsels, *John* 1. 18. & 5. 20. as Privy Counsellers are with State-matters, and because in him are hid *all the treasures of wisdom and knowledg*, Col. 2. 3. So that He can say, *Counsel is mine, and sound Wisdom, I am Understanding*, Prov. 8. 14. but especially because he reveals (as the great Prophet of the Church) the whole Counsel of God, *Luke* 7. 30. *Acts* 20. 27. *Mat.* 11. 25, 26, 27. Not only as far as is necessary for their salvation,

tion, but for their direction also, consolation and confirmation in all their concernments; He it is that saith of Himself, *I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment*, Prov. 8.20. and that for our great benefit, *ver.*21.

3. *The Almighty God*], *True God*, equal with the Father, 1 *John* 5.20. *John* 5. 17, 18. and as Mediator also, God-man, *John* 20. 28. *Luke* 1. 47. He must needs therefore be *Mighty*, (*Psal.* 50.1.) yea, *Almighty*, *Rev.* 1. 8. Now, as God said to *Abraham*, *I am the Almighty God*, (*Gen.* 17.17. that is, I am so for thy use; so it is here; Christ is the mighty God, that is, as a Priest, Mighty to bear the whole Wrath of God, *Isa.* 53. 4. to save us, his Blood being the Blood *of God*, *Acts* 20.28. And (as a Prophet) mighty in Word, and working mightily therein by the operation of his Spirit, *Gal.* 2. 8. whence it is that there are so many Believers (*Acts* 2. 41.) when there could not be one, but by that exceeding great power whereby God raised up Christ, and Christ raised up himself from the dead, *Ephes.* 1. 19. *Rom.* 1. 4. As a King also the power of a God sheweth it self in him to the rejoicing of the hearts of all his Subjects, *Isa.* 52. 7. *Zech.* 9. 9. It's he (chiefly)

(chiefly) who is that Mighty one that God hath laid help upon, that he might be the mighty King and Helper of his Church, for the overthrow of all the enemies thereof, *Psal.* 89. 19, 23. yea, the strength of *Jehovah* is not only *with* him, *Psal.* 110. 1, &c. but in Him, *Exod.* 23. 21. and that Name is on him, *Jer.* 23. 6. that he might throw down all spiritual Enemies, Sin, Satan, Death and Hell, 1 *Cor.* 15. 57. *Col.* 2. 15. Heb. 2. 14. He is not only a Counseller, but mighty to execute all his Counsels, and to overthrow all the Counsels of the Adversaries of his People, *Isa.* 8. 10.

4. *The Everlasting Father*], so he may be said to be two ways, 1. Because he is (together with the Father and the holy Ghost) the Author (which this word [Father] signifies, *Gen.* 4. 21. *Job* 38. 28.) and the giver of eternal Life, *John* 10. 28. and all lasting and everlasting good things, 2 *Thes.* 2. 16. yea, (as Mediator) He in special, is the procurer thereof, and the person in whom it resides, *John* 17. 2. 1 *John* 5. 11, 12. 1 *Joh.* 5. 20. 2. He may be thus called in respect of the care and kindness he hath for his people who are (oft) like shiftless Children, *Joh.* 29. 16. He ever looks to his

little

little Children; He hath an everlasting Kingdom, and as Kings are Fathers of their Country, so is he of his Church; but They only for a time, He for ever: But, besides both these (which are ordinarily mentioned) Christ is more properly a Father, because he hath a Seed and abundance of Children (*Heb.* 2: 13. *Psal.* 110. 3. *Acts* 2. 41.) purchased by his Death, *Isa.* 53. 10. begotten by his Resurrection, 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. *Ephes.* 2. 6. for whom he hath purchased, and (as an Everlasting Father) provided an everlasting Inheritance, *Ephes.* 1. 14. 1 *Pet.* 1. 3, 4. And in the mean time he takes such a Fatherly care of them here, as that no Man shall hurt them, *Acts* 18. 10.

5. *The Prince of Peace*]. He (as a Priest) procureth our peace, *Ephes.* 2. 16, 17. (*the chastisement of our peace being laid upon him*, *Isa.* 53. 5.) He (as a Prophet) preacheth peace, *Ephes.* 2. 17. *Isa.* 57. 19. *Job* 3. 4, 29. He (as a Prince) worketh peace for his People, by taking a course with all their Adversaries, *Mica.* 5. 5. and bestoweth peace on them, even that peace which passeth all understanding, *Psal.* 68. 18. *Gal.* 5. 22. *Phil.* 2. 7. When he left the world, Peace was his Legacy, *John* 14. 27. and now he is in Heaven,

ven, he is doing that which he went for, that is, preparing Manſions for his Diſciples wherein there ſhall never be any moleſtations, *John* 14. 1, 2, 3. *Iſa.* 57. 2.

How great a comfort is there in all this for all His? *To us a Child is born*; That's ſet firſt, and that brings all other comforts near to us; He hath married himſelf to our nature, and ſo He is our *Goel* and next Kinſman; Hereby we are extreamly near to God, and God is unſpeakably near to us: Hence, *To us a Son is given*; for He is not only a Child and Son of Man, but the Son of God. This admits us to the bleſſed enjoyment of all his following attributions, *The Government is upon his ſhoulders*; He that is our Child and our God is the *Prince of the Kings of the Earth*, *Revel.* 1. 5. having all power given him in Heaven, and in Earth, and in Hell, for our uſe, *Mat.* 18. 28. *Revel.* 1.18. For the managing of which princely Power for our beſt advantage, He is *Wonderful*, in his Works, *Exod.* 15. 11. *Counſeller*, in his Word; *the Mighty God*, for the bearing of our ſins on the Croſs, and disburthening us of them; as alſo, for the bearing down of all our Enemies, and freeing us from them, *John* 16. 11.

and

and so He is the *Prince of Peace*; commanding peace for us, *Psal.* 44. 4. and working peace in us, so that our hearts and minds are kept safe and quiet as in the strongest Garrison *through Christ Jesus*, *Phil.* 4. 7.

Ver. 7. Hitherto of our Saviours Person. In this Verse followeth the Description of his Government, which is the perpetual stay of the Church of God in this diversly and (oft) very sadly governed world, but, looking to Christ the Supream Governour, *Eccles.* 5. 8. all's well, or shall be well, all is right, or shall be set at rights at that last and great day. Mean-while, He moderates the worst things, and makes them to those that are his, the best things, *Rom.* 8. 28. This Government is described by the extent, peace, relation, administration, and perpetuity of it.

1. By the extent and amplitude of it; for it is a thriving and still-*encreasing thing*; Christs Kingdom is still coming
* Mat. 6. 10. * and coming on, which was especially by the coming in of the Gentiles, *Psal.* 2. 8. *Isa.* 49. 18, to *v.* 24. But still, and even unto the end of the world, whersoever the Gospel is preached, some are added, *Acts* 2. 47. & 11. 24. See *Mat.* 13. 31, 32, 33.

32, 33. All other Kingdoms and Monarchies have their decreases, but Christ's is still on the growing hand; yea, He gains by what he loses, the Blood of Martyrs being the Seed of the Church.

2. By the peace of it *]; for the Kingdom of God is peace, *Rom.* 14. 17. and Christ the King is *the peace*, *Mica.* 5. 5. More particularly, in and by the Kingdom of Christ, there is a Personal and Social peace. * Luke 2. 14.

1. A Personal peace], and that divers ways; For so there is a peace, 1. Of Justification, by the righteousness of Christ, which is a main thing in the Kingdom of Christ, *Rom.* 14. 17. and which, being purchased with his Blood as a Priest, he doth as a royal King, bestow on all those that are his, *Psal.* 66. 18. *Isa.* 45. 24. And by this Justification through Faith, there is inward peace filling the heart with joy in all outward troubles, *Rom.* 5. 1, 2, 3.

2. There is the peace of Sanctification by those gifts and graces which Christ, as an ascending King * bestows upon all those that are His by the Spirit * of grace (*Joh.* 7. 39.) and by which he rules in their hearts and souls; for *the Kingdom of God is within us*, *Luke* 17. 21. This peace of Sanctification hath two branches; for it ariseth, 1. * Psal. 66. 18. * Gal. 5. 22. Fruit of Spirit, peace.

1. From the mortification of our Lusts, which when they prevail there is fighting, 2 *Sam.* 24. 10. but when they are prevailed over, much tranquillity of mind as we see in *David*, who was freed from grief of heart, and greatly rejoiced in God when by *Abigail* he got the better of his irregular passion, 1 *Sam.* 25. 31, 32, *&c.* Thus Christ rules when the peace of God rules in our hearts, for the subduing of all those unruly passions that are the make-bates between Man and Man, *Col.* 3. 15.

2. Peace ariseth, not only from the subduing of our Lusts, but from the quickening of us to newness of life, from an holy frame of heart, and a lively exercise of Christian graces in our whole carriage. Thus by Faith there is perfect peace, *Isa.* 26. 3. and by the testimony of a good conscience in the faithful discharge of our duties, much rejoicing, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. and by patience, a possessing of our souls in peace, *Luke* 21. 19.

3. There is a Personal peace of relation, union and interest in Jesus Christ; as Men are much quieted if they have a friend nearly related * and dearly affected to them, and that is able in every condition to give them help, that hath enough in

* 3 John 10. 6. 1 Sam. 11. 9.

n him for their uſe. Thus it is with us in regard of Chriſt; yea, much better than thus, inaſmuch as his love and power is infinitely greater, and the union between us and him nearer (though ſpiritual) than that of our kinred according to the fleſh; therefore Chriſt (that his troubled Servants may have peace) calls them to himſelf, *John* 16. 33. *Phil.* 4. 4, 12, 13.

4. There is the peace of inward conſolation by that Spirit which is the Comforter, to allay and take away all heart-trouble, *John* 14. 26, 27. Hereby Jeſus (as *Jonathan*, 1 *Sam.* 23. 16.) ſtrengthens the hands and hearts of his Servants in God.

5. There is the peace of expectation; *Let not your hearts be troubled* (ſaith our Saviour, *John* 14. 1, 2, 3.) *for, I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am ye may be alſo*; look to that in all troubles here, and quiet and comfort your hearts, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 17, 18. 2 *Cor.* 4. 14.

6. Of ſuſtentation mean-time, *Acts* 18. 10. *Pſal.* 73. 23, 24, 26.

Thus of the perſonal Peace.

2. There is, by a reigning Chriſt, a ſocial-Peace, or a ſociety-Peace; And that, 1. By our own Regeneration, whereby

our spirits are made peaceable towards others. 2. By others Conversion whereby their spirits are made peaceable towards us: Both these we find, *Isa.* 11. 6, &c. Thus was the raging spirit of *Saul* calmed, and thereby the whole Church also had much more rest and quiet, *Acts* 9. 31. yea, by the convictions of the Word upon the hearts of wiser Men (though they be not converted) there ariseth a peace to the People of God by an over-ruling Christ; and Thus by *Gamaliel*'s counsel (upon a ground of Religion, to wit, that it was dangerous *to fight against God*, *Acts* 5. 39.) that bloody company were so convinced, that the Apostles had their lives, and were dismiss'd with a comfortable measure of peace. Unto all which we may add, that Christ (to whom all power is committed) bends and binds the hearts, tongues and hands of Enemies, as *Gen.* 31. 42. & 33. 10. raiseth up instruments, and ordereth out benign Providences as he pleaseth for his Churches peace. Hence something they do against the Children of God, and more they cannot do, though they would never so fain, and though they be never so like to do it; as we see in *Herod*, *Acts* 12. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6--- 11.

Hi-

Hitherto of the Peace of Christs Kingdom.

3. Christs Rule and Dominion is described, by the relation it hath unto *David*]. Here therefore is (as it were) the *Heraldry* of the Holy Ghost, describing this King as lineally descending from *David*; This was of great use to the Jews, because all their Covenant-comforts * and precious Promises were laid up in the House of *David*, 2 *Sam.*7.26,29. 2 *Kings* 19. 3, 4. 1 *Chron.*14. 2. yea, and is so to us Gentiles also (*a*); for the main Promises of the Covenant of Grace are made and belong to the people of God in all Ages (*b*), which people of God we Gentiles now are (*c*), over whom Christ the Son of *David* is as their King and Shepherd, *Ezek.* 36. 24. *John* 10. 16. *Rom.* 10. 12. *Hos.* 1. 10, 11. In sum, There's no comfort for sinners, but in a work of Redemption and Reconciliation; none can be merry solidly, but they that can sing that *new Song*, *Revel.* 5. 9. There's no Redemption but by the true *Messiah* and his Sacrifice, *Dan.* 9. 26. *John* 8. 24. *Acts* 4. 12. This true *Messiah* must be of the House and Lineage, and sit upon the Throne of *David*, *Luke* 1. 32, 33. & 2. 4. By this Description therefore we see

* 2 Sam. 23. 5.

(*a*) Luke 2. 32.

(*b*) Ezek. 37. 26. Acts 2. 39. Luk. 2. 10.

(*c*) Rom. 9. 25.

where to fix our comfort, there being no ſitting upon the Throne of *David* ſince this Child was born, but by this Child and Son of God only, to whom is given *Dominion and Glory*, *Dan.* 7. 14. *Mat.* 20. 18. yet we muſt remember, that He ſits on the Throne of *David* as *David* did, reigning outwardly and ſubduing Enemies as he did: His Kingdom is not a worldly * but a ſpiritual Kingdom *, wherein he rules by his Word and Spirit, *Pſal.* 110. 2, 3. *Mat.* 12. 18. *Luke* 17. 21. only while he rules thus in his Church ſpiritually, he rebukes the wickedneſs of the world as he ſeeth good outwardly, *Pſal.* 110. 6, 7. *Acts* 12. 20. yea, and of the Church alſo, *Acts* 5. 5, 10, 11. & 13. 11.

* Joh. 18. 36.
* Rom. 14. 17.

4. The Government of Chriſt is deſcribed by the manner of the adminiſtration of it]. His Kingdom is a *well-ordered and eſtabliſhed Kingdom* as the Covenant with *David* was, 2 *Sam.* 2. 3, 5. Chriſt in perſon did ſet things right in the Temple, *John* 2. 15, 16. And hath ſet an order in his Church, *Mat.* 18. 15. *John* 20. 23. *Epheſ.* 4. 11, 12. 1 *Tim.* 3. 2, &c. & 5. wholly, and *Tit.* 1. 5, 6, 7, &c. yea, for outward things, 1 *Cor.* 11. 2, &c. 34-- & 14 throughout, *Col.* 2. 5. It is alſo an *eſtabliſhed* Kingdom, ſo that the Gates of Hell

See Heb. 9. 10. all reformed.

Hell cannot prevail againſt it, *Mat.* 16. 18. nor any true Member of it, *Luke* 22. 32. *John* 17. 15. 1 *Pet.* 5. 10. with *v.* 8, 9. This appears becauſe all thoſe things are in it whereby the Throne is eſtabliſhed, as right Laws and righteous Executions of * *Judgment* in regard of his Enemies, and *Juſtice* in regard of his Subjects. * Heb. 1. 8, 9.

5. It is deſcribed by the perpetuity of it]: It is for *ever and ever*, *Dan.* 7. 14. *Luke* 2. 33. *Heb.* 1. 8. As long as this world laſteth, Chriſt doth * and will adminiſter it (as Mediator) as now it is; and ever after, the Kingdom will continue in a glorious ſtate, 2 *Tim.* 4. 1. & 2. 12. * 1 Cor. 15. 24.

All this is ſealed and aſſured by the *zeal* and ardent love of *the Lord of Hoſts*, which is the cauſe of it; and again, by the *zeal* and vehemency of ſpirit that is in the Lord of Hoſts for his own glory, his Churches welfare, to pay his Enemies their Wages, to make good his Truth, and perform his gracious Promiſes made to his people. When God puts on the *cloak of zeal*, as 2 *Kings* 9. 20. & 20. 15. he will throughly plead the cauſe of his Church, *Jer.* 50. 34. vindicate the honour of this great King, and ſee that all ſhall be well, though for preſent, it be

never so ill, *Isa.* 59. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18–20. & 63. 5, 6. Our zeal is oft seen in promising and professing; It were better shew it as God *doth* his, in *performing.*

That which yet remains to be more particularly spoken to, is, why Christ is so much spoken of in Promises and Promises of the Churches Deliverance; whereof these Reasons may be given.

1. Because Christ is the foundation of faln
* 2 Cor. 1. 20. Mans recovery*, of the covenant of grace,
Isa. 49. 8. & of all the grace & comfort of that covenant, which containeth all good in it, as the *Mine* of Mercy. He is therefore mentioned and described immediately after the Fall in that first grand Promise, *Gen.* 3. 15. revealing mans restoring upon this ground, that *the Seed of the Woman shall bruise the head of the Serpent* (that caus'd the Fall) by the Serpents *bruising of his heel*; that is (principally) by our Saviours Death, whereby he was destroyed that had the power of death, that is, the Devil, *Heb.* 2. 14.

After which Promise, Christ and the good things we have in and by Him, are still brought in and represented.

As 1. To *Noah*, to assure the restoring of the world after the Flood had drowned and destroyed all; for *Noah* built an
* Gen. 8. 20, 21. Altar*, offered Burnt-offerings, from which

which the Lord ſmelt a ſweet ſavour, and ſo reſolv'd never to deſtroy all again, as he had once done; This was not becauſe the Lord in the blood of Beaſts, but becauſe the ſacrificing of them was a type of the Sacrifice of Chriſt, *who gave himſelf for us an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for a ſweet ſmelling ſavour*, *Epheſ.* 5. 2.

To aſſure this further, God eſtabliſhed a Covenant with *Noah*, and with his Seed, and with every living Creature, *Gen.* 9. 9, 10, 13. whereof the *Rain-bow* was a ſign, which is applied by *Iſaiah*, *chap.* 54. 9. to the Covenant of grace, ſhewing that it iſſued from that.

2. To *Abraham*, ſaying, *In thee and in thy Seed, all the Nations of the Earth ſhall be bleſſed*, Gen. 12. 3. & 22. 18. which, by the Apoſtle *Paul*, *Gal.* 3. 8, 16. is applied to Chriſt.

3. Chriſt, and his Redemption is ſet forth in their Deliverance out of *Egypt*, where He that appeared to *Moſes* under this Name, *I am that I am*, *Exod.* 3. 14. appeareth to be Chriſt by the ſame title (in effect and as further unfolded) given to Chriſt; yea, taken to Him by Himſelf, *Revel.* 1. 4. So in *Exod.* 23. 20, 21, 23. He is deſcribed as their Deliverer out of *Egypt*: yea, therefore they were deli-

vered, because He (in a sort) was delivered in them, as being to come of them, *Hos.* 11. 1.

4. (To omit the Covenant of God with *David*, *Psal.* 89. 28. 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. which is intimated in their Deliverance from the *Assyrian*, 2 *Kings* 19. 34.) Christ is often mentioned in the Prophecies of their Deliverance out of the Captivity, as is manifest, not only in this Text, but in divers other Scriptures, and namely in these following, *Isa.* 7. 14. & 8. 8, 10. & 10. 27. *Jer.* 23. 5. to *v.* 9. so *Ezek.* 36. 25. *Dan.* 9. 17, 26. *Micah* 5. 2, 5. *Zech.* 9. 11. in which last place Christ is described with a [*Therefore*] *v.* 7. to shew that therefore they were delivered out of Captivity, because such a King was to come in fulness of time, the vertue of whose Redemption extended it self backward, and so it doth forward, unto all Ages of the Church, as that from which the Deliverance thereof issueth. Hence Deliverance out of *Babylon* so much excelleth Deliverance out of *Egypt*, because of the nearer connexion of it with Christ; yea, because his Coming and Kingdom is wrapt up in it.

Thus of the first Reason.

2. Because the great Deliverances in the

the Old Teſtament, were types and forerunners of our full Redemption by Jeſus Chriſt; as they iſſued from it, ſo they were like *John Baptiſt* to it, that is, ſent before, to give the Jews (a people much taught by the eye) ſuch notice of it as was ſuitable to their time and ſtate. This we may ſee in their Deliverance out of *Egypt*, which being ſet before the Ten Commandments of the Moral and Eternal Law of God, as a motive to the obſervation thereof, would be of little weight with us, who were not delivered out of *Egypt* as they were, but that our Deliverance out of the ſpiritual *Egypt*, and out of the hands of all our ſpiritual Enemies, was ſignified by it, and is preſented in it; as the Paſchal Lamb inſtituted upon that Deliverance, evidently ſheweth, *Exod.* 12. 46. *John* 19. 36.

The like we may ſay of their Deliverance out of *Babylon*, which (as the caſting of *Jonah* upon the dry Land, after his being three days and three nights in the Whales belly, *Mat.* 12. 39, 40.) ſet before them a riſing and a raiſing Chriſt, which they might look upon, in their bringing out of the grave of *Babylon* as the ſign & earneſt thereof, unto which we are led by the Prophets manner of expreſſing that Deliverance, *Iſa.* 26. 19. *Hoſ.* 6. 2. 3.

3. Becauſe the comfort of the Church and People of God, is compleated only in Jeſus Chriſt: For 1. He only can free us from *all* Enemies, *Luke* 1. 74. and namely, from ſpiritual Enemies which are the greateſt, and which do endanger us everlaſtingly, over all of which he hath triumphed (*Col.* 2. 15.) and ſo may we in him, *Rom.* 8. 33, 34. Nor is there any but He that can obtain *eternal Redemption and Salvation for us*, *Heb.* 9. 12. *Acts* 4. 12. *Iſa.* 45. 17, 22. 2. And in him only ſatisfaction is to be found; becauſe as he freeth us from every kind of Enemy, ſo he furniſheth us and ſupplieth us with every kind of comfort; for with Him we have every thing, *Rom.* 8. 32. 1 *Cor.* 3. 21, 22, 23. ſo that if his People be in never ſo much outward affliction, yea without Deliverance, yet they may overskip (as it were) that kind of comfort, and paſs from it to ſpiritual, *Phil.* 4. 4. 2 *Cor.* 1. 3, 4, 5. whereof ſo much is procured to them through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as that they may glory in tribulations, *Rom.* 5. 3. *Phil.* 4. 7. yea, if there be a dimneſs in ſpiritual comforts they may paſs from them to eternal; unto which the Redemption of Chriſt extends, and wherein it is

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compliſhed, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17, 18. 1 *Theſ.* 4. 18.

4. Becauſe none can partake in ſpiritual Deliverance, nor in outward Deliverance (in mercy) but only ſuch as are in Chriſt Jeſus: It's true, that they out of the Church may be ſaid to be delivered by Him, *as the Ruler of the whole Earth*, *Zech.* 4. 14. 2 *Kings* 5. 1. *Amos* 9. 7. *Mat.* 28. 18. *John* 5. 22. And wicked Men in the Church are (together with thoſe that are good) delivered by Him, *as the King of the Church*, *Deut.* 33. 26, 27, 28. with *Jer.* 23. 6. *Pſal.* 2. 6. ſo the Pool of *Bethesda* cured *whoſoever it was*, that ſtep'd in firſt after the troubling of the Water, (without any difference, it ſeems, between good and bad) and whatſoever Diſeaſe he had, he was delivered from it, *John* 5. 3, 4. for that healing Water remained as a Monument of Gods owning them as his People. But though Chriſt hath wrought ſtill (*Joſh.* 5. 13, 14, 15. *John* 5. 17.) in the Deliverance and Preſervation of the Church wherein there is corn and chaff, that is, in outward Deliverances; yet none are delivered ſpiritually, but only ſuch as are in him *as their Head*; Nor are any but they delivered outwardly in ſpecial mercy,

cy, though they partake in common kindneſs and Creature-mercy, *Pſal.* 145. 9. or Church-mercy (it is not in member (*a*) mercy); for where ſhould they have any ſuch mercy that have not Chriſt Jeſus, and that are expreſly excluded out of his Prayers? *John* 17. 9. Wicked Men have a great deal to anſwer, for their comforts and Gods loving-kindneſs, (ſuch as it is) which (if they repent not) ends in a greater treaſure of wrath, *Rom.* 2. 4, 5. whereas the Deliverances of Gods Children preſent Heaven to them, becauſe they proceed from that love which reacheth to Heaven, and endeth (or never endeth) there. Hence *Paul* argueth himſelf into Heaven upon an outward Deliverance from *Nero*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 17, 18.

(*a*) 1 Cor. 3. 23.

5. Becauſe all that are in Chriſt ſhall be delivered outwardly (if it be good for them, *Pſal.* 34. 7, 10. 2 *Cor.* 1. 10. 1 Tim. 4. 10.) And (without fail) ſpiritually, and eternally, *Mat.* 1. 21. *Rom.* 8. 1, 2. *John* 17. 15. 2 *Tim.* 4. 18.

Yea, This is the comfort of the People of God in all ſucceſſive troubles to the end of the world, that God will ſtill ſample his former and ancient Deliverances, and work time after time, for their en-

enlargement, *Isa.* 11. 11. *Isa.* 51. 9,10. & 65. 13, 14, 19. *Micha.* 7. 15. the end whereof, (and the evidence whereof) is this, *to serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of their life*, *Luke* 1. 74, 75. and to rejoice in this Lord always, *Phil.* 4. 4.

Isa. 38. 1, 2, 3.

Hezekiah *was sick unto Death, Then turned his face to the wall, And said, Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight.*

Q. 1. *WHat course are we to take for Death-bed comforts?*

Answ. 1. We must not pin our Faith upon any Party; nor order our ways by any mens way which they have chosen to themselves, though they appear never so godly. *Hezekiah* buildeth upon that here, not that which is proper to a party and such a company of Gods people, but he buildeth on (not in way of merit, but to shew his meetness for mercy) that which all the people of God in common consent in; that is, a sincere walking with

with God according to his will. It will not be enough to say at the last day, or in the last of our days, such and such men were of this mind; and therefore I (seeing them godly) was of their mind; but the comfort will be, I still strove to be of the mind of God revealed in his Word, and of the mind of other good People as far as they were of his, and no further; We must remember, it is a duty to take heed, not only of the errours of the ungodly, 2 *Pet.* 3. 17. but of the godly (their errours being no part of their godliness). If *Peter* say, *Not so, Lord, Acts* 10. 14. *Thou shalt never wash my feet, Lord, John* 13. 8. others must not come and say so because *Peter* said so; even a *Peter*, when he is not right in his head, or not right in his foot, *Gal.* 2. 14. is not to be followed. It's good following *Hezekiah* in the former Chapter, and in this; but not in the next, where he is tempted and overcome by a visit and message of high honour, but worse to him than the message of death here. The Rule is to follow godly Persons in that which is godly in them; for therein we have God and his Word going before us, but not in their unapproved opinions and ways. Follow them

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in the light, but not in the dark. As if a Perſon be Orthodox, and right in his judgment, and live an heterodox and ungodly life, a man may hear what he ſaith, and do well to be of his judgment, but muſt not do as he doth, *Mat.* 23.3. nor live as he lives; So on the contrary, every one is to be godly like thoſe that are godly: There, the Rule is, *Do thou likewiſe*, *Luke* 10.37. but if ſuch godly perſons err in their judgment or practice, then the Rule is, *Think thou*, *Do thou otherwiſe*, *Epheſ.* 5. 7, 11. Be not carried away with a *Barnabas* out of the right way, *Gal.* 2. 13.

Queſt. *But how ſhall I that am weak and ill able to judg, be of Chriſts mind when ſo many differ about the mind of Chriſt?*

Anſw. 1. Take the *Bereans* courſe, *Acts* 17. 11. and *Pauls* Counſel, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 21. Search Scripture, Try by Scripture. They who have a little skill in Money, yet having received a piece of Gold, can try what it is by the weight.

2. Take *Davids* courſe, that is, ſtill be praying to God for knowledg, and to ſet him in the right way. It requires skill to uſe the weights of a good eye to ſee the wonders of the words, and that's had by Prayer, *Pſal.* 119.18,-34.36. 3.

* Acts 10. 31. 3. Take *Cornelius* * his course who did both fast and pray, and in that way came to know by *Peter* that Jesus the Son of *Mary* was the true *Messiah*; But here, still Remember, when any thing is doubtful, not to resolve first, and pray to God after (as they, *Jer.* 42. 20.) such make as if they meant to make God of their minds; but go to God first, and resolve after according as God shall direct. It's horrible to think that God should be of our mind, but it's an holy Prayer to desire of him that we may be of his mind.

Quest. *What shall we say to those things wherein not only ordinary Persons differ, but even the best Christians, and the best Ministers also?*

Answ. 1. Stick fast to that wherein all that are godly agree, and wherein we agree with them, *Phil.* 3. 16. that is, Keep close, and with full consent and intent, to the main grounds of Religion, which breed good blood and spirits, and delight not in controversies that fill the head with air, and if by disputes a dram of Truth happen to be had, yet it is usually with the loss of an ounce of Love and Charity.

2. In things wherein Learned and godly

godly Miniſters differ, ſtand ſtill, and ingage not therein before it be clearly determined out of the Word of God. And, if it ſtill remain undetermined, then think it a matter of leſs moment, which thou mayſt let alone without thy ſouls hurt; but if thou be over-buſie with things uncertain, it will diſtract thee, and take thee off from more profitable imployment in things certain; curioſity is a great enemy to edification.

Hitherto of our firſt way for comfort at our laſt day, which is a ſincere walking in that way wherein all Gods Party conſent, and have ever found comfort. But,

2. We muſt not go (if we mean to have comfort when we are going out of the world) upon a Covenant of Works, that is, we muſt not be at that paſs, to hope for or loſe our hold of Heaven, if we do not carry our ſelves exactly, according to that which the Law of God requireth of us: For Man is not now innocent, as he was when firſt made, and ſo able to keep the whole Law perfectly, but he is faln from that ſtate, and become ſo weak and unable to keep the Law, as that the Law alſo is weak, *Rom.* 8. 3. and unable to comfort him; but inſtead

thereof pronounceth a curse against him, *Gal.* 3. 10. so that he that will not be comforted before his carriage be such, as that his Conscience (looking upon the Law) cannot except against it; that person (I say) can never have comfort, and that's the ordinary case of them who complain of trouble of Conscience: for that they say, is, such and such sins are committed; all services are weakly performed, my Repentance is dull, heart hard, faith feeble, life unprofitable (for howsoever some that are far gone and have lien long in trouble of mind, deny they have any goodness, yet commonly, and upon examination, all their complaints pitch and settle upon the degrees of it). Now such defects there will ever be while we are Travellers, and till we come to that place and happy home wherein the souls of just men are made perfect, *Heb.* 12. 23. *Eccles.* 7. 20.

Yet, Here we must take this caution along with us, to wit, that we are not (for all this) to lay aside the Law, as if, in matter of comfort there were no respect to be had to it; for we are to look upon good works prescribed by the Law as the helps of our comfort, and great helps also, because they do evidence our faith

faith and fear of God, *Gen.* 22. 12. and without them we cannot look to be saved, *Jam.* 1. 14.--2. 14.

But then, we must remember that we are not to pass judgment our selves, and pronounce a curse upon our selves from the strict sentence of the Law, as if that curse should be inflicted on us, only (to humble us the more, and make us the more to prize Jesus Christ) we may set it before us as that which is deserved by us, but carry'd from us by Christ that was made *a curse for us*, *Gal.* 3. 13.

More particularly, that we may hold our Comfort. 1. We are not to pass sentence upon our selvs, and to judg of our spiritual estate by our miscarriage particular actions, but according to our general course, because it is not this or that (that is done upon occasion, tentation, or in a passion) I say, it is not this or that, or divers things so done, that shews the frame of our heart (according to which God judgeth, 1 *Kings* 8. 39. *Jer.* 17. 10.) but what we do generally and constantly, *Acts* 13. 22. He hath a good heart and is one of Gods heart, who fulfils all Gods wills, that is, generally; though *herein* and *therein* he be overtaken sadly, 1 *King.* 15. 3, 5. 2 *Chron.* 16. 9. with

2 *Chron.* 15. 17. 2. Much less must we refuse to take comfort because of our failings, and comings short in the growth and degrees of Grace, for that we shall ever do while we are here; and if that should hinder comfort, a *Paul* himself could not take it, *Phil.* 3. 12. If therefore every miscarriage be lamented, and it be our grief, and we look upon it as
Act. 13. 22 our shame to come short of our duty, then God and we are of one mind, (for no man is grieved for what he loveth and hath a mind to) then we love what God loveth, and hate what God hateth; albeit sometimes *what we would, we do not, but what we hate, that we do*, Rom. 7. 15. then what is better in us, will more and more wear out the worse; and so there will be still a *going on to perfection*, and that
Heb. 6. 1. *pressing toward the marks*, which is a goodmans mark, *Phil.* 3. 14.

Q. *But if it be so dangerous and dismal to go by the Law, and a Covenant of works, what must we go by then, to get comfort in the evil day?*

A. By the Covenant of Faith and Grace, wherein our Salvation and Consolation lies, 2 *Sam.* 23. 5. 2 *Thes.* 2. 16. Now when we come for comfort to this Covenant, there are three things to help us to it. 1. Here

1. Here Evangelical obedience, that is, the doing of all that God requireth of us with ſincerity and according to our ability, is accepted, 2 *Cor.*8.12. He that walks as *David* (and here *Hezekiah*) did, that is, *in integrity of heart, and uprightneſs, according to all the Lord commandeth him*; ſhall be ſure to ſpeed well, though there be (as in *David*) divers falls and failings. 1 King. 15. 5

2. To thoſe that belong to God, and to whom the whole Covenant of Grace belongs, God hath in that Covenant of Grace promiſed the Grace of his Spirit for the performing of the foreſaid evangelical and acceptable Obedience, *Jer.*31. 33. *Ezek.* 36. 27.

3. Whereas there may be and will be ſtill, divers failings and miſcarriages, God hath in the ſame Covenant alſo promiſed that they ſhall be forgiven, forgotten, and not mentioned againſt them, *Heb.* 8. 12. *Jer.* 50. 20.

Q. *But how ſhall I know that I am in ſuch ſort in that Covenant.*

A. 1. By the fear of God in thy heart, *Jer.* 32. 39, 40.

1. Which they that belong to God, know they have, *Gen.* 42. 18. and can boldly profeſs it, 1 *King.* 18. 12. and

that in the presence of God himself, *Neh.* 1. 11. *Psal.* 119. 38. as being well able to make proof of it both to God and men, *Gen.* 22. 12. 1 *King.* 18. 13. *Neh.* 5. 15.

Cor. 6. 11 2. By the well-ordering of thy life, seeking and making it thy design to keep his precepts; upon this thou maist say, *I am thine*, *Psal.* 119. 94.

3. By worshipping God in spirit, and
om. 1. 9. when all's done, rejoycing in Christ only as thy confidence: Circumcision is the mark of the Covenant, and such only are the truly circumcised, *Phil.* 3. 3. *Rom.* 2. 29.

Obj. *But* Hezekiah *here seems to go by a Covenant of Works, for that he speaks of is walking and doing?*

A. But consider three things:

1. That he speaks of that as the evidence of his faith and goodness not as the ground of his comfort. It expresseth his capacity, not his claim.

2. What he saith, supposeth, and includeth in it the Covenant of Grace, for how came he by this *truth*, but by faith purifying his heart? *Act.* 15. 9. It is not natural, *Jer.* 17. 9. *Psal.* 51. 6. but accompanieth that great Covenant-mercy, the forgiveness of sin, *Psal.* 32. 1, 2. And how

how came he to walk ſo well but by his faith, *Gal.* 5. 6. whereby he did in contemplation of Gods All-ſufficiency, perform his part of the Covenant, which is, to walk uprightly, *Gen.* 17. 1.

3. He clears all himſelf, *v.*17. by imputing his life, and miraculous recovery not to his life, and good profeſſion, *v.* 3. but to Gods love to his Soul, by which he caſt all his ſins behind his back, and ſo the Sun and he went back.

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*Iſa.*42. 1, 3. with *Mat.* 12. 20.

Q. What's meant by Chriſts *bringing forth judgment*, and that unto *truth* or *victory*? for ſo it is ſaid, *v.*1. *He ſhall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.* v. 3. *He ſhall bring forth judgment unto truth.*

A. By *judgment* is meant in Scripture, not only the adminiſtration of Juſtice, but a juſt adminiſtration of all things, or a ſetting of every thing right, as *Pſal.* 94. 15. *Judgment ſhall return to righteouſneſs*; that is, Whereas the ordering and carriage of things here below hath ſeemed to ſwerve from, take its leave of, and go away from righteouſneſs, God will ſo

bring things about, that it shall apparently, and in the sight of all return to it again; all shall see the Government of God, and the Righteousnes of God met together, and follow them with joy. Now to shew judgment, or *bring forth judgment*, is to lay down the Law for setting every thing right that is out of order. This is done by the preaching of the Word, and in special the doctrine of the Gospel, which is the just and right rule of Faith and life, and so may be expressed by the name of *judgment*, which signifieth both a right state and frame of things, and the right rule and means by which they are so framed; as Judgment and Government in a Land, includeth the Laws which are the rules of Ruling.

But to come nearer, the Gentiles before Christs coming, were, and all men naturally are, out of order four ways:

1. In respect of their Understanding, *Rom.* 1. 21. *Ephes.* 4. 18. It's true of every natural man, *There is none that understandeth*, Rom. 3. 11. Jer. 10. 14. Hereupon Christ sends his Law, his Gospel (which go under the name of *right judgments*, *right ways*, Neh. 4. 3. Psal. 45. 6, 7. Isa. 52. 15. Act. 13. 10.) to open their eyes, *Act.* 26. 18. & 17. 23, 29. *Saul*, though bred

up

up at the feet of *Gamaleel*, was foolish and mad, till Christ by Gospel-revelation made him wiser, *Tit.* 3. 3. *Act.* 26. 9, 11. *Gal.* 1. 16.

2. In regard of their Affections, *Eph.* 2. 3. In all men (before Conversion) divers lusts and pleasures have the mastery, *Tit.* 3. 3. Now as the Understanding is set right by the Doctrine of the Gospel, so are the Affections by the directions and Grace of the Gospel; for the Gospel of Grace teacheth us to deny all worldly, and to abstain from all fleshly lusts, *Tit.* 2. 11, 12, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. And the Grace of the Gospel enableth us so to do. Thus men are freed from the corruption that is in the world through lust, 2 *Pet.* 1. 4. So that in those in whom the Gospel prevaileth, the best things are their desire, the holy God is their fear, sin is their sorrow, Christ is their joy, Heaven is their hope, *Tit.* 2. 13.

1 Thes. 4. 3, 4, 5. Isa. 11. 6. 1 Cor. 12. 31. Isa. 8. 12, 13. 2 Cor. 7. 10. Phil. 3. 3.

3. In regard of their conversation and actions. Before Christ comes and brings forth judgment, there's *all uncleanness with greediness*, Ephes. 4. 19. See *Rom.* 3. 10. to *v.* 19. But the precepts of the Gospel, and the learning of Christ, set men right in all manner of conversation, 1 *Pet.* 1. 15. *Tit.* 2. 12. *Ephes.* 5. 8, 9, 10, 15.

4. In

4. In regard of their Conſolations: Before men be acquainted with Chriſt, food and fruitful ſeaſons make them glad, *Act.* 14. 17. Now Chriſt ſets men right this way by bringing them to walk *in the comforts of the holy Ghoſt*, Act. 9. 31. & 13. 48, 52. Briefly, Chriſt did ſet the Gentiles in order both in reſpect of their Religion, *Gal.* 4. 8. 1 *Theſ.* 1. 9. and their Converſation, 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. As for thoſe in the Church he brings forth judgment whereby all they might be ſet in order, (and much more orderly we may ſay they are than thoſe out of the Church, by the convincements of the Word), but becauſe many are dealt with in a way of means only without inward grace, therefore they are like *Simon Magus*, they are not right, *Act.* 8. 21.

By bringing forth judgment to truth, may be underſtood the miniſtring of true judgment, or of judgment according to the truth of the Word, (as judgment among men is a true judgment when it is adminiſtred according to the true meaning of the Law.) For, Chriſt was all for truth, *Joh.* 18. 37. As he was a Miniſter of the Circumciſion *for the truth of God*, in his preaching, ſo as he is the King of the World, and his Church, he

Iſa. 43. 10. *My Servant is my Witneſs.*

is

is the administrator of judgment according to the truth revealed in the Word, and so he brings forth *judgment to righteousness*, Psal. 94.15. It is in *Mathew* [to victory] and that's all one, and followeth upon the other, for truth will be always victorious. Now there is a double judgment:

1. By the revelation of the Word, this is victorious two ways: 1. In the World, for how did the Gospel conquer and prevail there notwithstanding all encounters? *Act.* 19. 20. *Col.* 1.6. 2. In the Elect, 1 *Cor.* 14.24,25. *Act.* 2.37. Psal. 110. 2, 3.

2. By the operation and regeneration of the Spirit in the hearts of Gods Children. As for others, judgment is brought forth *to them*, but as for them, it is brought forth *within them*, for the Kingdom of God is *within them*, Luk. 17.21. Yet in them there is a combate, the part unregenerate riseth up, and is loth the Spirit should be the Judg and King, and lay down the Law, *Gal.* 5. 17. but Christ brings judgment into victory, by making the regenerate and judicious part, the faith and grace of his children to prevail over all their corruptions and tentations, *Rom.* 8.2. 1 *Joh.* 5.4. & 4.4. See Psal. 119. 33.

But here it must necessarily be added, that

that this word *judgment* containeth also the execution of judgment, and Christs judiciary proceeding for his Church, and against his and their enemies, *Psal.* 110. 5, 6, 7. For he rides in his Majesty prosperously (conquering and to conquer) *because of truth*, whereby *his enemies fall under him*, Psal. 45. 4, 5. He executing upon those that are obstinate, *the judgment written*, Psal. 149. 9.

This is done, 1. Here, *Act.* 13. 11. Thus *Julian* confess'd himself overcome, *Vicisti Galilæe.*

2. At that last and great day, wherein all shall be compleated, the Spirit convinceth the World of *judgment* now, and that because *the Prince of this world is judged*, Joh. 16. 11. Christ hath taken order with him already in his own Person, and by his Death taken away his power from him, *Heb.* 2. 14. yet is he reserved to a further judgment, even *the judgment of the great day*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 4. *Jude* v. 6. When Satan shall be fully trodden under the feet of the lowest member of Jesus Christ, *Rom.* 16. 20. Yea, and all enemies generally shall be put under the feet of Christ and them, 1 *Cor.* 15. 24, 25. 2 *Thes.* 1. 6, 7. He will *bring*
Psal. 37. 6. *forth* also their *judgment to light, and their righte-*

righteousness as the noon-day. Then *shall there be a full revelation of the righteous judgment of God in Jesus Christ*, Rom. 2. 5. Act. 17. 31.

Isa. 40. 18. & 41. 21. & 42. 17. & 43. 9. And *Ch.* 44. 9. & 45. 20. & 46. 1.

Q. *Why doth the Lord by his Prophet* Isaiah *(and otherwhere) speak so much against Idolatry and Idolaters?*

A. In general, for the same reason for which so much is spoken also (in so many fore-going Chapters in this Prophesie, and so in other Scriptures) of *Sennacherib* King of *Assyria*, and of his besieging *Jerusalem*, of his insolency, and of his ruin; to wit, because in this the great question, the grand case is handled, that is, *Whether God* (who was then the God of the *Jews*) *be the only true God?* Unto this *Sennacherib* opposed his Idol-god, or gods, as if greater than *Jerusalem's* God, as also his second god, (or rather his first upon which he did most really relie) that in the strength of his Army, and of the arm of flesh, for of that he bragged most, *Isa.* 36. 8, 9. & 37. 11, 12. Hereupon the great God pleadeth for himself, the con-

coneluſion and reſult whereof is (as to ſuch enemies as *Sennacherib* was), *Be ſtill and know that I am God*, Pſal. 46. 10. Iſa. 37. 20, 29. And as to Idols, *There is no God elſe beſides me*, Iſa. 45.21. Jer.10.11, 12, 14.

This is a matter of ſo great importance, that no marvel if much be ſaid of it, for whereas other Sins oppoſe the Word and revealed Will of God, this ſin of Idolatry doth not only oppoſe that, as it is made known in the firſt, and ſecond great Commandments of the firſt Table, but alſo doth more immediately and eminently ſtrike at the very nature and eſſence of God. In particular there are two reaſons that may be given why the Lords Prophets are ſo copious in this Argument, in ſpecial, *Iſaiah*.

1. Becauſe though *Sennacherib* were ſo worſted and deſtroyed in the Temple of his god, to ſhew the difference between his Idol, and the true God, by beating him on his own dunghil, and killing *Sennacherib* under his noſe; yet afterward the *Babylonians* prevailed ſo far as to conquer and captivate the whole people of God, deſtroy *Jeruſalem* that was the City of God, and burn the Temple that was the Houſe of God, which

Iſa. 37.37, 38.

the

the World observing, (*Babylon* especially, *Jer.*50.11.) and withal being still ready to ascribe such successes to their Idols, as *Judg.* 16. 24. *Isa.* 46. 1. they might therefore imagin that their Heathen gods were of so great power that the God of *Israel* (on whom they professed they rested for their safety) was not able to stand before them: Hence the Lord declareth that what Heathens did, and the great victories they obtained was not by the power of their Idol-gods, but by his power, and for the fulfilling of what he had before hand purposed and determined, *Isa.* 37.26, 27. And that he at length would be revenged on them and all their graven images, *Isa.* 46. 1, 2. *Jer.* 51. 44, 52.

2. Because the Church and People of God being under so heavy judgments, so woful a captivity, and that for so long a time, they might thereby be tempted to question the Omnipotency, the Goodness, the Righteousness of their God, and so let go their Faith and their God, which was their life, *Hab.* 2. 4. Hereupon the Lord useth so many weighty words, propoundeth so many unanswerable arguments against all Idols, describeth so fully the folly and madness of Idolaters, and prophesi- Isa.46.7,8.

pheſieth of ſo many executions upon the enemies of his Church, and upon the Idols of thoſe enemies, that hereby the Faith of his People might be confirmed, and their hearts eſtabliſhed in an holy and firm confidence in his All-ſufficiency, notwithſtanding all the ſad and long-laſting calamities that ſhould come upon them, yea, in the midſt and height of them, which was the uſe of that excellent and animating Song which the Prophet *Iſaiah* left with them, *chap.* 26.

It is not to be ſpoken what weak and corrupt creatures we are, (as theſe Scriptures ſhew, *Iſa.* 40.27. & 45.9. & 49.24. & *Jer.* 33.24.) and how apt to idolize it with Idolaters, when they have eminent
Ezek. 20. 32. ſucceſſes, and we are under hatches. If *Amaziah* bowed himſelf to the gods that could not deliver their own People, (2 *Chron.* 25. 14, 15.) how much more will men be apt to do ſo when thoſe gods ſeem to carry all before them, and the People of God to be delivered into their hands to do what they will with them? No marvel therefore if God ſpeak ſo much in ſo great weakneſs, and to prevent ſo great wickedneſs. Even as our Saviour, in the 14, 15, 16, Chapters of St. *John*, ſpake abundantly and admirably

ſably before hand to ſtay the hearts and prevent the offence of his Diſciples in regard of thoſe heavy things that were to befall him ſuddenly, and them ſhortly, in and from an evil World. For ſo provident is God our Saviour for his Churches peace, that he lays in Comforts and Cordials before hand, that by a continual recourſe unto them, their fainting ſpirits may be revived in the midſt and weightieſt of Soul-depreſſing ſufferings. Even as ſometimes he ſent a man before, that is, *Joſeph*; and a woman before, to wit, *Eſther*, when a ſore Famine was to come upon them, and a ſorer deſtruction was to be plotted by *Haman* againſt them; ſo ſtill he ſends Miniſters before, (as here *Iſaiah* long before their laſt Captivity) that (on the one ſide) ſuch great troubles might be (and ſo ſtill may be) expected, becauſe of the certainty of them, *Jer.* 28. 2, 14. and his People might not be deluded by vain preſumptions; and (on the other ſide) by a pre-diſcovery of the comforts in them, and the happy iſſue of them, might not fall into unworthy, and heart-ſinking dejections and deſpairs, *Joh.* 16. 1, 4.

Pſal. 105. 16, 17. Eſth. 4. 14

Q

Isa. 45. 23.

I have ſworn by my ſelf, the word is gone out in righteouſneſs and ſhall not return, that unto me every knee ſhall bow.

Q. *WHence is it that the bowing of every knee to God is ſo remarkably (yea with a Divine Oath) Propheſied of in this Text?*

A. For opening this Text, obſerve that as the Gentiles were invited to Chriſt, *ver.* 22. ſo in this verſe their coming-in, and coming under God in Chriſt, is aſſerted and aſſured. The ſum therefore is this, That it is a certain truth that every perſon and creature ſhall be ſubjected to the Government of God in Chriſt.

Now to God our Saviour there is a threefold Subjection:

1. By External Profeſſion; ſo *Ananias*, *Sapphira*, *Simon Magus*, and falſe
Gal. 2. 4. Brethren, yield a formal but a feigned Subjection, as *Pſal.* 13. 44.

2. By real Converſion; ſo *Saul*, the Jaylor, and others ſubmitted, *Act.* 2. 37, 41. *Act.* 9. 6. *&* 26. 30.

3. By an over-ruling Power; ſo all Men,

Men, Creatures, and Devils, are and shall be put under his feet, *Mat.* 28.18. *Revel.* 1.18. *Isa.*60. 12.

The particular here expressed of bowing the knee, is an External Declaration of this Subjection, like that of kissing the Son, *Psal.* 2. 12. and shutting the mouth at him, *Isa.* 53. 15. as *Job* 29. 9, 22.

See of this bowing the knee, *Gen.*41. 43. *Judg.* 5. 12. *Psal.* 22. 29. This was eminently accomplished in the subduing power of Gospel-preaching after our Saviours Resurrection and Ascension, and shall be most universally and fully accomplished at the last day when all shall stand before the Judgment-seat of Christ, *Rom.* 14. 10, 11, 12. 2 *Cor.* 15. 25, 27.

The Confirmation and further Explication of this we have, *Phil.* 2. 9, 10, 11. where by bowing at the Name of Jesus, (it is not said at the naming * as if that were a duty of the Text, but at the Name), I say by bowing at the Name is meant the acknowledgment of the dignity and eminency, and to be subject to the authority of that person; as Name is taken otherwhere, *Act.* 4. 12. *Eph.* 1. 21. †

* *Nomen non est vox Jesus quæ appellatio erat in nativitate, sed sublimitas quæ erat post resurrectionem.*

† So in all languages, *Jacet sine nomine truncus.* In the Kings Name denotes his Authority and Political Name, not personal appellation, which only declares who it is that is invested with the Regal Power.

Bowing the knee therefore may signifie in general that office which is due from every Creature as subjected to an exalted (though sometimes a depressed and despised) Jesus, *Act.* 5. 31. with *Isa.* 52. 14. & 53. 3. But withal it denotes an outward manifestation of Subjection, because it must be to the glory of God, *Phil.* 2. 11. So that the body must not be bowed to an Idol, when Protestants come into Popish Countries on pretence the heart is kept for God *: But on the contrary, our bodies must be given to God, and to Christ who is God; which the Scripture urgeth, not only from the power which Christ hath over us, but from the price he hath paid for us, 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. This is in the letter seen in bowing the knee in Prayer, *Psal.* 95. 6. *Luk.* 22. 41. *Act.* 20. 36.

* *Nicodemitæ inter Deum & Diabolum partiuntur, ut animam alteri assignent, corpus alteri, dum Missis intersunt.* Calv. tract. Theolog. *pag.* 728.

Obj. *God is a Spirit, and in Gospel-times will be worshipped in Spirit,* Joh. 4. 23, 24. *why then will not that suffice?*

A. True, in Spirit; that is, 1. Without the carnal and worldly Ceremonies of the Law, *Heb.* 9. 1, 10. 2. Without Hypocrisie, 1 *Chron.* 28. 9. *Psal.* 32. 2. 3. In Spirit, that is, not only outwardly but especially inwardly, *Rom.* 1. 9. *Phil.* 3. 3. But it is not in Spirit without the body, for

for our whole ſelves are to be offered to God, *Rom.* 12. 1. the body by name; and we muſt yield our *members ſervants to righteouſneſs*, Rom. *6.* 12, 13, 19. where by members may be meant the natural faculties of the ſoul, exerciſing their operations by the members of the body, *Jam.* 4. 1.

Uſe. Let us therefore bow to God and to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to ſome purpoſe, which is done three ways:

1. By entertaining the Doctrine of Chriſt as a Prophet, hearing him, and by being taught by him as the truth is in Jeſus, *Eph.* 4. 21. bringing our thoughts and natural wit in obedience to him, and to it, 1 *Cor.* 3. 18. 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5.

2. And his Commands as a Lord, againſt our natural and corrupt will, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 1, 2. *Act.* 4. 19, 20. *Gal.* 1. 16. and that both in doing and in ſuffering, *Act.* 9. 6. & 21. 13. *Phil.* 1. 20. The Martyrs bowed the knee in the moſt eminent way when they would rather yield their bodies to the fire, than worſhip a breaden God.

3. And cleaving to his Sacrifice for Life and Salvation, as he is a Prieſt, with the renouncing of our own righteouſneſs, in point of Juſtification, and bowing

and ſubmitting humbly to the Righteouſneſs of God, *Rom.* 10.3. *Paul* bows the knee very low, and ſets up Chriſt very high, when he ſays, *I deſire to be found in him, not having mine own righteouſneſs, &c. Phil.* 3.9.

This bowing the knee is juſtly thus extended as being applied to, and verified in thoſe things that have no bodily knees at all, *Phil.* 2. 10.

Yield to Chriſt (Oh Chriſtian) willingly, leſt his force come upon thee; in the Magiſtrate, *Rom.* 13. 4. in the Miniſtery, *Luk.* 10. 10, to 17. 2 *Cor.* 10. 6. eſpecially from himſelf more immediately, *Mat.* 21. 44. 1 *Cor.* 10. 9. This *Julian* felt. Put thy neck therefore under his eaſie yoke that thou maiſt not feel his iron rod, *Pſal.* 2. 9. Bow thy knee leſt he break thy back, be willing to be his friend and ſervant, leſt thou be forced to be his footſtool, *Pſal.* 110. 1.

Iſa. 45. 23. latter part.
Unto me-----every tongue ſhall ſwear.

Qu. *HOw is Swearing an evidence and ſpecial character of ſubjection to, and owning of the true God?*

A. For

A. For Explication of the words: *By every tongue*, is meant, the World in common that comes in to Jesus Christ, Gentiles as well as Jews; every tongue of all Tongues, Nations, and People, *Rev.* 7.9. *shall swear*, that is, by me, or by my name, *Deut.* 10. 20. Or to me, or to the Lord of Hosts, *Isa.* 19. 18. that is, to my honour, or with respect to me in it. So that the sense and sum, and intent of the word is, That in the religion of an Oath there is the acknowledgment of a God, *Jer.* 16. 14, 15.

For 1. all swear by the gods they own and serve; as the *Athenians* by *Isis*, the *Egyptians* by Garlick and Onions, which they accounted gods; so *Laban* sware by the God of *Abraham*, of *Nahor*, and of *Terah* the Father of them both, of whom it is said that they served strange gods, *Josh.* 24. 2. But *Jacob* sware by the *Fear* of his Father *Isaac*, that is, whom his Father feared and served, *Gen.* 31. 53. Psa. 2. 11.

2. When the Worship of God is commanded, Swearing is commanded with it, and is an expression of it, 2 *Eph.* 1. 5. *Deut.* 6. 13. & 10. 20. Swearing when and as we ought.

3. This is the way of Gods People, hlding forth in it all Obedience, *Jer.* 12.

16,17. And when the People of God are deſcribed, Swearing by him is their character, *Pſal.* 63. 11. *Iſa.* 19. 18. & 65, 16.

4. God will be avenged on thoſe who joyn any other with him in this ſpecial part of his Worſhip, *Zeph.* 1. 4, 5.

Q. *What Religion is there in an Oath?*

A. It gives God the Glory: 1. Of his Omniſcience.

1. It being an acknowledgment that God is the ſearcher of all hearts, and knows when a man ſwears, whether his meaning be true or fallacious, and the thing he ſwears be true or falſe, *Joſh.* 22. 22, 23, 24. An Oath is Gods binding of men to true dealing, becauſe of his all-ſearching; and ſuppoſeth that he knoweth and obſerveth, and is witneſs how all matters are carried between parties and parties; whence it is that men do, and ought, *Exod.* 22. 11. ſo to acquieſce, and reſt ſatisfied with it; ſee *Joſh.* 2. 12, 14. *Gen.* 31. 49, 50. *Mal.* 2. 14.

2. And the honour of his Authority to judg, ſuch as they have to whom appeals are made, *Act.* 25. 11, 21. *Gen.* 31. 53. *Gen.* 14. 22, 23. & 18. 25.

3. And of his Juſtice in determining; for an Oath refers to God for the doing

or

of right between parties that may do one another wrong, *Gen.* 31. 53. 1 *King.* 8. 31, 32.

4. And of his Power in executing; for an Oath is such an appeal as calls to God to take cognizance of the business, and deal with him that swears by his Name according to his behaviour in it, punishing him that violates his Oath, 2 *Sam.* 2. 1, 21. *Ezek.* 17. 19. And on the contrary, rewarding him that is right in this and other parts of his Worship, *Psal.* 63. 11. & 15. 1, 4, 5. *Jer.* 12. 16. for this is so special a part of Divine Worship, that it is us'd to set forth the Worship of God in the Generality, *Isa.* 19. 18.

Obj. *Whatsoever is said of this in the Old Testament, yet Christ in the New saith,* Swear not at all, *Mat* 5. 34.

A. 1. Negatively: Swearing is not there forbidden absolutely:

1. Because this Text speaks of New-Testament-times, as appears by the reciting of the first part, *Phil.* 2. 10. yea confession to the glory of God may be said to be set down; *v.* 11. as answering the latter part of the verse here wherein Swearing is mentioned; Swearing to God being (when it is rightly, and holily

lily performed) a good and great confeſſion of what maketh much for the glory of God. 2. Becauſe this denial of an Oath contradicteth not only many Texts in the Old Teſtament, but alſo a plain New Teſtament-Scripture, *viz. Heb.6.16.* 3. Becauſe that which is commanded in the Old Teſtament, not as a Ceremonial, or Judicial thing, but upon Moral grounds, and for Moral ends (as an Oath is for the acknowledgment and honour of God (as here) and for the good of our Neighbour (as *Pſal.* 15. 4. or for a mans own indemnity (as *Exod.* 22.11.) that is ſtill to be continued, *Mat.* 5. 17. Chriſt came not to take away every Law, nor any Law wherein there is a Moral Obligation, as referring to a Moral Commandment, as an Oath doth to the firſt, ſecond, and third.

2. Affirmatively: and ſo it may be ſaid, that univerſal ſayings are not always to be taken univerſally, but according to the ſubject-matter, which if it be reſtrained in other parts of Scripture, that reſtraint is to be ſuppoſed though it be not expreſſed; as that general ſaying of *becoming all things to all*, is to be reſtrained to things indifferent, 1 *Cor.*9.22. Again, it is the manner of Scripture when a queſtion

vid. Riv. *in* 3. *in præcept. Decal.*

queſtion is propounded, to omit that which is granted, and inſiſt on that which is controverted. Now this *Swear not at all*, is limited, and the univerſality taken off, by the requiring of the uſe of an Oath in other Scriptures; and lawful Swearing alſo is here omitted, and unlawful (which our Saviour was to reprove) is ſpoken to; ſo that *ſwear not at all*, is no more but this, not at all corruptly, perverſly, and namely, according to the corrupt Doctrine and Practice of the Scribes and Phariſees, eſpecially in two things, Creature-ſwearing and common Swearing.

1. Creature-ſwearing, about which alſo, there were two faults among the Phariſees:

1. That they taught men to ſwear by the Creatures, or indulged the uſe of that kind of ſwearing; and therefore Chriſt (as alſo *James*) ſaith, *Neither by heaven, nor by earth*, Mat. 5.34,35. *Jam.* 5.12. ſo neither by any part of a mans ſelf, as head, hand, heart, for theſe are Creatures, and not God; and therefore Chriſt ſpeaking of ſuch ſwearing, *Mat.*23. 16. doth not approve thoſe forms of Swearing *, but only ſhews that he that ſo ſwears is bound by it when the Oath is

* Amef. *Caſ. de Juramento. Non formas approbat faciendas, ſed factas ob igare docet.*

is once taken. A man must Swear by a greater than himself, *Heb.* 6. 16. but the creatures are less: now it's true that some Learned Divines admit a kind of relative Swearing by the creatures (namely such whereon there is an apparent impression and appearance of God himself, as Temple, Altar, Heavens, &c.) because though these creatures be named, the Oath is not terminated in them but directed to God; yet an Oath being a part of Gods Worship, and Swearing being to be by the God of truth, *Isa.* 65. 16. it's dangerous to name the creature, as it is absolutely unlawful religiously to invocate a creature in relation to God. And if the Oath be directed to God (as *Math.* 23. 21.) what need the creature be named? Besides the Superstition and Profaneness, that useth to be in such Oaths.

Vid. Rivetum hanc quæstionem erudite discutientem, in tertium præceptæm Decal.

2. The second fault in the Pharisees about creature-Swearing was, that they made some of those Oaths binding, and others not-binding, according as themselves pleased; yea, they made those less binding, and made men more debtors (in regard of the higher nature of them) to a careful performance of them, *Math.* 23. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21. or (as some express it) they held it was not such an Oath as would

would make a man perjured, if the Name of God were not directly uſed in it, but the name of a creature: well therefore might our Saviour ſay, Swear not at all, viz. ſo abuſively.

2. The other Corruption was in their common Swearing, unneceſſarily, Idlely without a due call and cauſe. Unto this that of our Saviour is applied, *Matt.* 5.37. where (for the preventing of Raſh Swearing) he ſaith, *let your word or communication*, that is, your ordinary Communication in your dealings one with another, be *yea yea*, (when a matter is to be affirmed) and *Nay Nay*, (when it is to be denied,) and *what is above theſe*, that is, is added by vain and ſuperfluous Swearing, cometh of evil. The Phariſees (it ſeems) made as if there was no fault in Swearing; ſo they Swear truly, and did not forſwear themſelves, *Math.* 5. 33. Whereas it is a great fault to Swear lightly, and prophanely.

No reaſon therefore to abandon an Oath, wherein

1. So much honour is done to God: For though an Oath be for mens uſe, yet it is to God alſo and to his Glory, being in the reverent taking thereof a Solemn *act of Religion and a ſetting forth of Gen.24.3.

of God in his glorious and incommunicable Properties.

2. And so much right is done to men, *Eccles.* 8. 2. *Josh.* 14. 9. 12. as to *Rahab* the Harlot, the *Gibeonites* and others.

3. And so much peace is established, and controversies ended among men, *Heb.* 6. 16.

4. And when thereby, so much Satisfaction and Security is given in cases of doubt, fear, and greater concernment. See 1 *Kings.* 18. 14, 15. 1 *Sam.* 20. 42. *Jer.* 38. 16.

5. And which is so subservient to Religion, which is more a binder by the bond of an Oath, 2 *Chron.* 15. 14, 15. *Ruth.* 1. 17. *Nehem.* 10. 29. 1 *King.* 22. 14.

6. And which is (in general) the great bond of humane Society, and Justice between man and man, *Gen.* 21. 23, 24. & 26. 28, 29, 31.

Sure men might in the Court as well as in the Church, exceedingly glorifie God, did they mind, contemplate, reverence, tremble at, and act conformably to those God-exalting Attributes that appertain to the Religious use of an Oath.

Isa.

Isa. 53. 1.
Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the Arm of the Lord revealed?

Qu. *What is the Reason why so few have in all Ages, entertained the Gospel?*

A. In the first place it must be considered that this [*who hath believed*] doth not exclude *all*; But rather include *some*, yea *many*, *Act.* 41, & 4, 4. & 21. 20. *Col.* 1. 6. that is, *very many*, if they be considered a-part: but it sheweth that they are but few, in comparison of those who reject the report. Now, the Prophet (after this complaint of incredulity) setteth forth the Reason and the Remedy of it.

1 The Reason of it,

It is, because there be so few to whom *the arm of the Lord*, that is, that eminent Power of the Lord, and the Excellency residing and putting forth in the Person and Kingdom of Christ, *is Revealed.*

Wherein two things are included, viz.

1. That there is a great might in the Gospel, for the *arm of the Lord*, is in it, *Rom.* 1. 16. & 15. 18. *Gal.* 2. 8. 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. 1 *Cor.* 14. 24, 25. 2 *Cor.* 4. 7. *Ps. 98. 1.

2. But

2. But this arm is hid and revealed to few, *John.* 1. 11, 14. It's like the River *Siloah* that runs softly, and is not so much observed, *Psal.* 46. 45. *Isa.* 8. 6. or like the host compassing *Dothan*, not discerned till God, opened mens eyes, 2 *King.* 6. 7.

Qu. *How comes it to be thus hid?*

A. By the Lowness of Christ's Person and Condition.

1. By the unsightliness of Christ to a worldly Eye, as to his person, *Isa.* 52. 14. Which is applicable also to his Kingdom and concernments; for as his Person, *Isa.* 42. 2. so his Kingdom, is not of this World; Neither he, nor it, come *with observation*, Luk. 17. 20, 21. or any outward pomp. Which appears in the description we have here of his coming into the world, 1, 2. for he did come and grow up *before him*; that is, before the Lord, (conceive it, according to his counsel and purpose in his sight, and with his support) *as a Tender Plant.* Look to God, and there was *before him*, Power enough; But look to men and the outward appearance, and he grew up as a little weak plant and Rod, *Isa.* 11. 1. *and as a Root out of a dry ground*, that doth not thrive by the moisture of the ground; no more doth the *Messiah* and his Kingdom rise up

and

and flouriſh in an ordinary way, but by *a dew from the Lord*, *Mica.* 5. 7. Which as it waiteth not for, ſo it is not expoſed to, the eye of the ordinary ſons of men; He came into the world when the Family of *David* was very low. So that this Prophet, ſpeaking of Chriſt's appearing doth not mention the Kingly ſtate and royal Family of *David*, but ſaith, he ſhall come out of the *Stem of Jeſſe*, *Iſa.* 11. 1. *Act.* 13. 22. Whoſe Family was (in compariſon) mean, whence it ſeems to be that when they had a mind to ſhake off the Government which God appointed ſhould reſide in his Family, they expreſs themſelves thus; *neither have we inheritance in the Son of Jeſſe*, 1 *King.* 12. 26. No marvel therefore if the world could ſee nothing that would takewith them, in this (outwardly) hopeleſs Shrub, wherein the meanneſs was apparent and palpable, but the arm of heaven hid and undiſcernible.

2. By the meanneſs of his Condition while he had his abode in the world.

1. This is here deſcribed; 1. Negatively: *He hath no form nor comlineſs*; which is not to be underſtood of Chriſt's Feature and Complexion (which was no doubt, as other mens that are not deformed, he being not any way ſtained with

Sin, and, being it's like, of a more exact temper of body) but the uncomelineſs is to be applied to his condition, and to his form and face alſo when ſpit on, buffetted, *Iſa.* 50. 6. He (and ſo his Kingdom) were both of them beautileſs to a carnal eye. No marvel therefore if they that judged according to the appearance, *Joſh.* 7. 24. were unwilling to own him, and if ſuch be ſtill averſe from his Kingdom and ways, *Pſal.* 2. 3. *Matt.* 13. 55, 56, 57. *Luk.* 19. 14. for only called men chooſe Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 1. 22, 23, 24. O how many Learned men can ſee a beauty in *Plato*, *Ariſtotle*, *Aquinas*, and (perhaps) in great *Auguſtine* (not in his Sanctity, but in his Learning and Sufficiency.) And yet if a man preach in the evidence and demonſtration of the Spirit, he will be accounted by men that are graced with Learning, but not made wiſe by Grace, a paſſing poor Preacher, and his Sermon a dry Sermon.

2. This is deſcribed affirmatively: As Chriſt had but little (in outward ſhew) of that which was deſirable. So he did in his Life, Courſe, and whole Adminiſtration of his Office, lie under that which was, to a carnal eye, horrible; For (*verſ.* 3.) He was deſpiſed, deſpighted

ed, and *rejected of men*, Joh. 9. 28. yea, of his own *Citizens*, *Luk.* 19. 14. and at laſt, a *Barabbas* was preferred before him; he was, a *man of Sorrows*, made up of them (as it were) and made (more than all other men) *acquainted with grief*, *Heb.* 4. 15. *Mark.* 3. 5. *Matt.* 26. 37. *Luk.* 22. 24. *Heb.* 5. 7, 8. *We* (Jews, that were *his own*, *Joh.* 1. 11.) *hid our faces from him*, (as from an horrid Sight, *Job.* 19. 15.) Away with him, Away with him, we cannot abide the Sight *of him*, *Mark.* 14. 65. *He was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not*, *Matt.* 27. 39. to 44. *and v.* 63. *and Matt.* 27. 20. to *v.* 24.

Indeed, he was made, and made himſelf *of no Reputation*, Phil. 2. 7. Accordingly, his Miniſters and chief Officers, as they were, at firſt poor Fiſhermen, ſo ſtill they are *Earthen Veſſels*, 2 Cor. 4. 7. (ſo called, not onely with reſpect to mans Common, but to their own perſonal condition, which is commonly more contemptible than that of other men,) yea, and the Subjects of Chriſt's Kingdom are ſuch alſo, men of no, or of low, note and name, 2 *Cor.* 3. 26, 27. No wonder therefore if the men of the world be loth to join themſelves to ſo mean a Chriſt and a Church and Company of men of ſo

small account, *Joh.* 7. 48, 49.

Hitherto of the Reason of the Complaint. See *Psal.* 28.

Now 2 of the Remedy; for the Prophet here doth not only complain of, but excuse and take off the Scandal of the cross, and so shews how we may help our selves against all low thoughts arising from the low things of the Kingdom of Christ.

This is done by declaring the true cause, and the singular good issue and success of our Saviour's low, sad, and suffering Condition.

1, Cause. It was not for any fault in him, which if it had, he might have been the worse thought of, but it was not, *v.* 9. his Judge upon a full hearing of all that could be alledged against him (when he spake very little for himself) was his witness that there was no fault in him, *Mat.* 27. 24. *Luk.* 23. 4. 14. 22. *Joh.* 19. 38. If any ask therefore how it came to pass that Christ had such coarse and curs'd usage: the answer and sure truth is, *He hath born our grief and carried our Sorrows*, *v.* 4. What he endured we procured, we did eat the sower grapes and his teeth were set on edge: the sorrow was his, but the sin ours; yet this is granted, that

We

We (Jews) *did esteem him Stricken, Smitten of God*, and (deservedly) *afflicted* (as *Mat.*26.65, 66. *Joh.* 10. 33. *and* 19. 17.) But *v.* 5. it was Jews mis-judging to think God was an Enemy to him for that which was evil in him; the thing true and certain is, that *he was wounded Job.* 20. 25. 27. *for our transgressions*: *bruised* (indeed of the Lord *v.* 10.) but it was *for our iniquities*, *Chastised*, *Mat.* 27. 26. but *for our peace*, and that *with his stripes we might be healed*: We were the wandring Sheep, *v.* 6. and He, the suffering and Sacrificed Lamb: We went *our way*, He bare our woe, and like *David* 2 *Sam.* 24. 17. loves to have all laid upon himself, as all was laid in the old Law, on the innocent Sacrifice, *Levit.* 1. 4. *and* 16. 21. And never was any Sheep or Lamb so quiet under Shearing and Slaughter as he was, who *opened not his mouth*, but, even to admiration, kept it shut, *Mat.* 27. 14.

2. And as he took his suffering patiently, *v.* 7. So (if we look to the Issue) he was taken from it gloriously, *v.* 8. *He was taken from prison*, that is from all the Straits wherein his Soul was shut up, *Mat.* 26. 37, 38, and 27. 46. as also from the grave wherein his body was laid, *Psal.* 16. 10. Act. 2. 24. an Angel descending,

Heb out of the shutting up after 36.

ding, rolling away the Stone from the door of the Sepulchre, and attending him in his coming out of prison, *and* from *Judgment*; that is, as from all those pressures that he was under by the Justice of God as he was our Surety, so from all that which he was adjudged unto by the Injustice of men, God making known his innocency in his resurrection that fully justified him, 1 *Tim.* 3.16. Being thus rescued and risen, his Exaltation goes on, for *who shall declare his generation*, that is, the eternal duration of his person? *Rev.* 1.18. *Isa.* 53.13. and the encrease, continuance, and perpetuity of his Kingdom, *Psal.* 110.2,3. There's a depth in these things of Saviour-exaltation, and such a multiplication of marvelous things that we cannot attain the wonders that are in them, and if we should declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbred, *Psal.* 40. 5. Which Christs Sufferings and low estate are so far from making an objection against, that they are the very reason of this his Advancement; *for*, thus it was, and *therefore*, 1 *Pet.* 1. 11. *Phil.* 2. 8, 9. God thus highly exalted him (in these and his following Eminencies) because *he was cut out* (as a tree cut down *of the land of the living*, *Job.* 19. 33. *Mat.* 27. 63. and from the inhabitants

of

of the world, *Isa.* 38. 11. not for any fault of his, *Psal.* 59. 3. 15. *Joh.* 25. but *for the transgressions of God's people*, and *v.* 9. for this reason also, that is, because we were wicked, and had procured to our selves that wages of Sin which is death. *He*, that is God, *made his grave with the wicked*; that is, God permitted and determined (*Act.* 4. 28.) that he should die and be prepared for the Grave by his being *numbred amongst transgressours*, *v.* 12. but withal, he took order *in* and at *his deaths* (for his death contained many deaths in it) that he should be honourably and remarkably buried in a new Sepulchre purposely provided by *Joseph of Arimathæa a rich man*, *Mat.* 27. 57. that by that act of Providence (as we may say) he might be distinguished, and in some sort, exempted from the number of common Malefactors, as there was great reason why he should, *because* (to resume that mentioned in the latter end of *v.* 8.) *He had done no violence, nor was any deceit found in his mouth*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 22. *yet v.* 10. *it pleased the* (gracious) *Lord* (upon our account) to bruise him and put him to grief; but for glorious ends in respect both of him and us.

3. Success And so followeth the Success of our Saviour's humiliation and passion, and resurrection.

Use 1. A numerous posterity; *when thou shalt make his Soul*, that is, himself (wherein his Soul had a great part, *Mat.* 26. 38. *and travelled much*, *v.* 11.) *an offering for Sin, he shall see his seed*, *Psal.* 27. 30. *Job.* 12. 32. 1 *Pet.* 1. 3. *Act.* 2. 41.

2. Perpetuity: He shall *prolong his days*, and live after death in his person and conserved Church, *Rom.* 6. 9, 10.

3. Prosperity: *the pleasure of the Lord*, that is, the gathering of the Church out of all Nations (a work arising from Gods will and pleasure, and wherein he takes pleasure) *shall prosper in his hand*, by his hand or power in Heaven and from Heaven, 1 *Cor.* 3. 5, 6, 7. & 14. 24, 25. *Gal.* 2. 8. *Col.* 1. 29. and in the hand of the Minister here on earth, 2 *Cor.* 4. 7. *Act.* 19. 20. *Ephes.* 4. 11, 12, 13. *Mark.* 16. 20. *Heb.* 2. 4. Of this Prosperity there is set down,

1. The measure, *v.* 11. *He shall see the travel of his Soul*, that is, the fruit of the travel of his Soul, and of the pains of Death he sustained, (like the pains of a travelling Woman, especially if they be refer'd to his Soul-sence of the wrath of God) This fruit of what he hath born for man's Salvation, He shall see in so great measure (not only in his own glory in heaven, but in the glorious fruit

fruit thereof in all the world *Col.*1.6.) that *he ſhall be ſatisfied*, and receive full content in it.

2. The means by which the Kingdom of Chriſt is ſo proſperous, and that is, by the word of the Goſpel ſpread abroad in the world and received by Faith: *By his knowledg*, that is, by the Goſpel-Manifeſtation of Jeſus Chriſt, as *the Lord our righteouſneſs*, *Jer.*23.6. *ſhall my righteous*, (1. *Joh.*2.1. *a righteous-making*, 2 *Cor.*5. 21. *Rom.*5.19) *Servant juſtifie many*, that is, all that believe, *Act.* 13.39. *for he ſhall bear their iniquities*, and in that way (the juſt ſuffering for the unjuſt, 1 *Pet.*3.18.) they ſhall be made juſt, *Rom.*3.25,26. for juſtice muſt be ſatisfied by a propitiatory ſacrifice before ſinners can be juſtified, 2 *Cor.*5.21 None made Righteous but by Chriſt, made ſin for them, *Luk.*18.13,14. *Joh.*33.24. Behold then what Chriſt hath gained by his Suffering, when he ſees thereby ſo many begotten to him; So many juſtified and ſaved by him, yea by him as a *Servant*; for Chriſt juſtifies not only as God but as man (that is, as Mediator in which regard he is a Servant and at command, *Iſa* 52.13. *John.* 14.31.) and by working perfect righteouſneſs for us in our fleſh: So that we are ſaved not by

by works (*Tit.*3.5.) but by words, *Act.* 11.14. and are juſtified, not by any thing we can do, but by what he hath done and ſuffered for us, laid hold on by Faith, *Joh.* 17.20. as it is made known to us in the doctrin of the Goſpel, 2 *Pet.* 1.2,3

Now beſides this poſterity, perpetuity and proſperity, there is accrewing unto Chriſt from his low eſtate, the higheſt *Glory*, *v.* 12. *Therefore*, that is, *becauſe he hath poured out his Soul unto Death, he was numbered with tranſgreſſors*, Mark. 15.28. *bare the Sin of many*, Mat. 26.28. *and made interceſſion for the tranſgreſſors*, *Luk.* 23.34. In a word, becauſe he hath fully undergon and done all that was to be don and ſuffered by him according to the will of God, and that with much patience and a gracious interceſſion, for thoſe that took away his life; Therefore *will I divide him a portion with the great*, that is, I will highly exalt him, *Phil.*2.9, 10,11,12. *Pſal.*89.27. *John* 3.35. make him higher than the Kings of the earth, yea give all into his hands, *John.* 3.35. *and he* (being perfectly Victorious over all enemies) *ſhall*, as Conquerors uſe to do, *divide the ſpoil with the ſtrong*; as great and ſtrong and the moſt Victorious Warriors uſe to do: if they divide, he ſhall divide

divide alſo with and above the beſt of them; ſee *Epheſ.* 2.21. *Col.* 2.15. Now all this is for our benefit alſo. If *Joſeph* have all in his hand, *Jacob* ſhall not want a portion; when he divides the ſpoil, we ſhall fare the better, for he *receives* to give us, *Pſal.* 68.18. yea, they that tarry by the Stuff, and are willing but not able to do as others do, ſhall have a part in the Son of *Davids* ſpoil, 1 *Sam.* 30.24. If he live after the pouring forth of his Soul unto death, we ſhall live alſo, *John.* 14. 19. 2 *Cor.* 13. 4. and becauſe he was numbred among tranſgreſſors, and no interceſſion of *Pilate* (or his Wife *Mat.* 27.19.) could get him off, but die he muſt, therefore he ever lives to make interceſſion for us, which without a ſacrafice and blood he could never have done, *Heb.* 7.25. & 8.9.24,25.

The Review of all this will ſhew fully how little a reaſon there is to be offended at the Croſs of Chriſt, at any meanneſs, ſhame or ſorow that befel him: And that, upon the Conſideration of theſe particulars; For

1. All of it was neceſſary in regard of the will and love of God. *It pleaſed the Lord thus to bruiſe him, v.* 10. and it was alſo Voluntary in regard of the love of Chriſt,

Chriſt, *John* 3.16. *Luk.*22.15. *John.*10.15. 17,18. and his will to do his Fathers will, *Heb.* 10.7.

2. It was neceſſary in regard of us, for we could be ſaved no other way and delivered from our loſt Condition, any more than there was cure to be had in the wilderneſs any other way but by the braſen ſerpent, *John.* 3.14,15. *John.* 11, 50. *Act.* 4.12.

3. And therefore, all that was laid upon him, was not for any fault in him, but was for our faults, by reaſon of our ſinful and damnable Condition, that he might ſuffer in our place and ſtead, and as our Surety, what we deſerved, and thereby prevent our periſhing.

4. This way of God was as effectual as neceſſary for mans reſtoring and redemption, *Heb.*9. 12. & 10.14.

5. Albeit he lay (upon this ground) under all this ſhame and ſuffering, yet the Lord put much honour upon him in his ſufferings, as many other ways, *Joh.* 18.6 *Matt.* 27. 17. 52, 53, 54. ſo by *Pilate's* commanding his body to be delivered to a decent and diſtinguiſhing and choice burial, *Mat.* 27. 58. But afterwards, in and by his reſurrection he was much more glorious, there being there-

thereby an admirable increaſe, *Pſ.*110.3. of his ſeed, and after it an everlaſting abiding in life, both in his Perſon and in his members.

6. After he had endured the Croſs, and deſpiſed the ſhame, *Heb.* 12. 2. and outgrown it all by his reſurrection, He triumphantly aſcended into Heaven, and there ſitteth on the right hand of God, dividing his ſpoils, giving gifts to men, even to the rebellious alſo, communicating all the rich priviledges of his paſſion, together with the benefits of his Kingly Power, exerciſing alſo his ever-abiding Interceſſion in the behalf of all true Believers. Now conſidering thus the cauſe of the low eſtate of the *Meſſiah*, and the honour and benefit that follows thereupon to him, and flows therefrom to us, what reaſon can there be of rejecting; how great reaſon is there of receiving the Goſpel-report? eſpecially conſidering further, that if any reject the report upon pretence that God's way to ſave them is not good enough, they cannot poſſibly eſcape everlaſting damnation, *Heb.*2. 3. *Joh.*3. 28.36.

Iſa.

Isa. 63.17.

O Lord why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardned our heart from thy fear? Return for thy Servants sake the tribes of thine inheritance.

Q. *How can it stand with the holy reverence of God that ought to be in the Servants of God, to fasten such erring and heart-hardening upon him as this verse expresseth?*

A. For the opening of this Scripture these things may be first observed in the generality; *viz.*

1. That Gods Childen are subject to erring, and some obduration, and may be (at times) grievously under desertion, and the sad sense of a gone-God, *Hos.* 5. 15.

2. They are in this condition (which puts a difference between them and bad men) with much complaining, *Exod.* 33. 34. *Psal.* 143. 7. *Job.* 20. 13.

3. They complain to God who alone can help it, and hath bound himself to his praying Servants to order the matter otherwise, *Ezek.* 36. 26, 37.

Obj. *But they seem not only to complain to God but of God?*

A. What

A. What they ſay, they pray; that is, they ſpeak it not peremptorily but ſubmiſſively, and are upon their knees (as it were) all the while they ſpeak it: It is not a ſtout and ſtomachful imputation, as if God were in fault for it, but an humble and faithful expoſtulation, becauſe it belongs to God to deliver from it, of which expoſtulation and wreſtling with God, there is ſpecial reaſon, inaſmuch as this erring and hardning may be ſaid to be of God divers ways; *viz.*

1. Permiſſively; whereas he might hinder it, prevent it, and all the occaſions of it, by his power.

2. Privatively; when he might withſtand it by his grace.

3. Pœnally; as an act of his Juſtice, *Ezek.* 20. 39. (which in a meaſure and for caſtigation, may be exerciſed upon his Children.) But where-ever theſe things are, we muſt remember that the hardneſs is ours though the hardning be Gods; and if there be erring upon any temptation, the error is our own, but leaving to it, yea giving up is aſcribed to God, *Rom.* 1. 24. 2 *Theſſ.* 2. 11. 2 *Chron.* 32. 31.

4. Occaſionally; for there is a Providential hardning and cauſing to err, God putting men into ſuch a condition (and that

that juſtly) as theſe here into a ſeventy-years Captivity, whereby their hearts are mightily deaded and apt to deviate:

As 1. By the removal of Gods Ordinances and ſpiritual help, *Pſal.* 74. 9.

2. By being caſt among Idolaters, profane men, ſubjected to a power, and compaſſed with a company tempting to ſin, *Ezek.* 20. 25, 32.

3. By being put into a joyleſs and hopeleſs eſtate, under wicked and cruel enemies, living in all eaſe and proſperity, *Zach.* 1. 11. *Pſal.* 73. 10, *Hab.* 1. 13. Propitious and proſperous Providence is a quickener, 2 *Chron.* 17. 5, 6. Pænal, and dejecting Providence is a deader, *Iſa.* 64.7. *Pſal.*137.4. Now hereby God may be ſaid (in a ſort) to cauſe to err, not that God is the author of any ſin (which it is horrible to imagin) but becauſe God is the orderer of ſuch Providences, as whereupon through mans weakneſs and corruption, ſin and wandring from the right way enſueth: Hence *David* ſaith, *That they that drove him from the inheritance of the Lord, ſaid, Go ſerve other gods,* 1 *Sam.* 26.19. Not that they ſaid ſo, but expelling him from the Ordinances of God, and forcing him to fly for his life among Idolaters, amounted to that; becauſe

cauſe of the great temptation there was in it. See *Deut.* 28. 64.

But beſides that erring and hardning may be ſaid to be of God in theſe reſpects which are common to wicked men, there are ſome reſpects wherein this complaining and humble caſting of theſe things (in a ſort) upon God, is proper to the Children of God, who are imboldened to do it.

1. In regard of Gods Covenant, in reference whereto it may be ſaid that they err, not only when God could hinder it, but when he hath bound himſelf to hinder it, *Iſa.* 30. 21. *Ezek.* 36. 27. Since therefore he hath promiſed to make them go in the path of his Commandments, he is humbly quëſtioned by his erring and grieving ſervants, as if he made them go out, for how could they go out if he caus'd them, and made them to go in? *Pſal.* 119. 35. So *hardning from his fear*, is put (by the boldneſs and familiarity of Faith) upon his account, becauſe he hath promiſed to get hardneſs out, and put his fear in and into the hearts of his Children, *Ezek.* 36. 26. *Jer.* 32. 40. Hereupon faithful and holy men preſs God with theſe grievances, ſo as no wicked men can who have no right to the Cove-

nant, and to whom, if they ſhould plead as they do here, God might ſay, I withhold from you what I am no way tied to give you; and if you be in an erring and hardned ſtate, what do you tell me of it? (to wit, continuing in a ſtate of unbelief and ungodlineſs) I am not bound by any promiſe I have made to help you who regard not the conditions of the Covenant on your part, *Pſal.* 50. 16. Lay not the blame upon me if you live and die in a ſad ſtate, it's you that are enemies to your own good.

2. In regard of Gods wonted ordinary dealing with his people, whereupon they may ſay, Why doſt thou *cauſe to err*, for want of working as thou was wont to do to hinder it? Wilt thou forſake the work of thine own hands? *Pſal.* 138. 8. Is not thy former an engagement for thy future working? *Phil.* 1. 6. Now wicked men cannot plead this, that God hath begun to build, they are not able to deſign a better time, and to ſay, Lord, it was not wont to be ſo; but as for Gods children, an inchoation is an obligation, *Iſa.* 59. 21. *Ezek.* 39. 29. They may ſay, Work (O our God) as thou waſt wont in us and for us, *Iſa.* 26. 12. Withal ſince they had a promiſe of return out of the Cap-

Captivity (wherein while they were ſhut up, their hearts were much ſhut up as the earth in an hard froſt when a thaw opens it), therefore they might ſay and pray, *Return, O Lord, and graciouſly alter our ſad and heartleſs condition, ſo will we not go back, and err from thy ways: O quicken us and we will call upon thy Name*, Pſal. 80. 14, 18. Our hearts ſhall not be hardened from thy fear; ſome life in our condition putting life into our affection, we will ſtir up our ſelves to take hold of thee, *Iſa.* 64. 7.

Now that this Prayer belongs to the faithful appears (as by the fervency of it all along, ſo) by this very complaint, for none are griev'd with erring that have not a mind to go in the right way, nor doth a ſtone complain of its hardneſs; complaint of hardneſs ſhews there is ſome ſoftneſs, and a deſire of Gods return, a lothneſs to live without him.

Scripture-Questions out of *JEREMIAH.*

Jer. 3. 6.

The Lord also said to me in the days of Josiah *the King, Hast thou seen that which back-sliding* Israel *hath done? she is gone up upon every high mountain, and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot.*

V. 11. *The backsliding* Israel *hath justified her self more than treacherous* Judah.

Qu. *How can Judah be said to be worse than backsliding, and (for their Sin) divorced and destroyed* Israel; *especially in the days of* Josiah *when there was so eminent a reformation?*

A. 1. Negatively: The Reason is not because *Judah* was in every respect worse than *Israel*, for it is said *Judah* did *rule with God*, and *was faithful* with the Saints; that is, Gods Government in the posterity of *David*, was preserved among them in the civil State; See 2 *Chro.* 13.8. *to v.*13. And for matters of Religion, (though there

there were foul defections, Yet) they kept to the Ordinances and Officers which God had appointed, and which were transmitted to them by the Saints their faithful Forefathers, when-as *Israel* constantly followed the Calves (which destroyed them, *Hos.* 8. 6.) and fell quite from God to the Idolatry of *Baal*, 1 *King.* 18. 21.

2. Affirmatively: This may be spoken of *Judah*;

1. Because they were exceeding Sinful; For.

1. They fell into that Idolatry whereof *Israel* was guilty; It is said here, not only that *Israel* played the harlot, *v.* 6. but that *Judah* went and *played the harlot also*, *v.* 8. See what is said before of *Judah*, *v.* 1, 2. and *Jer.* 19. 4, 5, 7, 13. See also 2 *Chron.* 33. 9. *Ezek.* 16. 47.

2. They were eminently guilty in looking after forbidden Confederacies, and trusting to *Egypt* and *Ashur* and forrein aid, *Jer.* 2. 18. *Isa.* 7. 20. & 8. 6. *Ezek.* 23. 11, 12, 13. 30, 31.

3. They were abominable in their practice, as we see, *Jer.* 7. 6. 9, 13. *Ezek.* 16. 49, 51, 52. It is expressly said, *Neither hath* Samaria *committed half of thy sins*, *v.* 51.

2. Because the sin of *Judah* admitteth

many aggravations beyond that of *Israel*, viz.

Because they had more means of doing well than *Israel* had; for they enjoyed the Ordinances of God, and had Priests and Levites of God's own appointing that instructed them, 2 *Chron.* 30. 22. and Prophets that warned them that they should not do as *Israel* did, *Hos.* 4. 15. And whereas the Kings of *Israel* were generally wicked they had better Kings to rule them, and when they fell into Sin under worse Kings; They had divers godly Kings to reform them, as *Asa*, *Jehoshaphat*, *Hezekiah*, yea *Manasseh* at last, 2 *Chron.* 33. 15, 16.

2. Because they saw *Israels* Sin, and knew how by the Messengers of God it was cried out against; which if they had had any Zeal for God would have made them to have abhor'd it, for that's the nature of goodness and the fear of God, when men make void his Law, to love it the better, and keep closer to God, because they see others run away from him, *Psal.* 119. 126, 127, 128. *Ruth.* 1. 15, 16, 17. *Josh.* 6, 68.

3. Because they saw before their eyes the fearful Judgment of God upon *Israel*, that was ruined, carried into Captivity,

ty, (2 *King.* 18. 9. 11, 12.) and it is said here, to have a *Bill of divorce given her*, v. 8. by which they ought to have been warned; but, though they saw all this, yet they went on still in their evil way, *Ezek.* 23. 9, 10, 11. Nay, they did not profit by their own Corrections, *Zeph.* 3. 1. 27. *Jer.* 2. 30. *Isa.* 1. 5.

4. Because of their pride; They were not humbled before God, nor brought to stand in awe of him notwithstanding all their Sin, and the fury of the Lord poured forth upon them for it, *Jer.* 44. 6. 10. but said, they were innocent, *Jer.* 2. 35. and bore up themselves as if all were well, by *the Temple of the Lord*, and their outward performances: This pride, whereby *Judah* was apt to boast of their integrity being compared with degenerate *Israel*, much heightened their Sin, *Jer.* 7. 4. 10, 11, 15. See *Isa.* 65. 5. & 66. 5.

5. Because of their Hypocrisy, *Isa.* 9. 17. For though they turned to God in *Josiahs* days, yet we find here, that it was not *with all their hearts but feignedly*, v. 10. It was *backsliding Israel*, but *Treacherous Judah*; and Treachery may be said to be worse than Apostacy, because it looks better, and yet is not better, but is made worse by a mocking of God. It's true that

Josiah was a glorious Reformer, but the Reformation was *His*, not *Theirs*; it was buried in *Josiahs* grave: and as they were very bad before that Reformation, so they continued to be so *in heart* still, and therefore their last destruction is fixed on the sin of *Manasseh*, wherein they had a part, 2 *Chron.* 33. 9. and whereof they did not really repent (notwithstanding that *Josiah* made them (in and for his time) to serve God) but continued though (then) good in shew, still bad in truth, *Ezek.* 4. 6. and so in the Captivity they paid for all together. See 2 *King.* 24. 3, 4. *Jer.* 15. 4.

Hence it followeth, 1. That all Sins are not equal, *Joh.* 19. 11.

2. That the best of Gods people (in some respects) may be (in other respects) the worst, for the Ordinances and Means that they enjoy, the Mercies wherein they partake, and the Judgments whereof they are the beholders and wherein they are partners, together with the greater professions which they make, make them the chief of Sinners, *Matt.* 11. 20. to *v.* 25.

3. That, howsoever people in the days of a *Josiah*, and when a Spirit of Reformation worketh vigorously, cry up Reformation with their mouthes, yet their hearts are oft against it, 2 *Chron.* 20. 33.

and

and they abhor to subject themselves to divine discipline, only they are *made* (for a time) to do that to which they have no mind, 2 *Chron.* 34. 33.

4. And when Reformation is professed, rejected, and Sin resumed, then, a Nation is in danger to go more and more down the wind, till they run into utter ruine, as the Jews did after *Josiahs* days. Reformation either prevents, or preceeds ruine.

Jerem. 3. 16.

And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and encreased in the Land, in those days saith the Lord, they shall say no more, The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, neither shall it come to mind, neither shall they remember it, neither shall they visit it, neither shall it be done any more.

Qu. *Whence is it, or what is meant by it, that it is said, with such variety of expressions, that when the People of God be multiplied and encreased in the Land, the Ark of the Lord should be no more mentioned or minded?*

A. These words are two ways expounded.

1. To

1. To shew that when they returned out of Captivity and encreased and multiplied in their own Land, there should then be a great unity between the House of *Judah*, and the House of *Israel* (as is said v. 18) notwithstanding the great difference between them and their continual opposing one another from the days of *Rehoboam* unto the Captivity; all which time *Israel* was lift up, as by their outward prosperity, so by their invented Pompous Service at *Dan* and *Bethel* against *Judah*. And *Judah*, on the other side, took heart against *Israel*, by their retaining and enjoying of the Ark and Ordinances of God, 2. *Chron.* 13. 8. to v. 13. But being returned to their own Country, they should so far profit by the Captivity, as (renouncing all Idols) to join together in the same instituted Service at *Jerusalem*, *Hos.* 14. 3. *Amos* 5. 5. *Hos.* 2. 17. Whereas ever since the revolt of the ten Tribes, the controversy between them and *Judah* was maintained (as controversies use to be, *John.* 4. 9.) by their several ways of worship, 2 *Chron.* 13. 8. *&c.*

2. But the words are by the greater number of Expositors understood thus; *viz.* that by *multiplying and increasing in*

the

the Land, is meant the encreaſe of the Church by the preaching of the Goſpel, and the Law and Doctrin which went forth from *Jeruſalem*, *Iſa.* 2.3. And the nation of the *Jews* unto whom firſt the Goſpel came, *Act.* 13.46. And ſo the meaning of the words is conceived to be this; That the *Meſſiah* being come, and the Goſpel being preached among the Gentiles, all the ceremonies of the Law figuring out the things of the Goſpel (whereof the Ark was chief, *Iſa.* 4.21, 22.) ſhould ceaſe and be aboliſhed; and the multitude of the Chriſtian Church, conſiſting both of Jews and Gentiles (but owned by the Jews from whom that Word by which the Gentiles were converted, proceeded *Iſa.* 49.20, 21, 22.) ſhould meet together to call on the name of the Lord, *Rom.* 10.12, 13. 1 *Cor.* 1.2. *Act.* 9.11. as it is ſaid here *v.* 7. *They ſhall come to the name of the Lord*, even to that name, *Act.* 4.12. & 15.14. The former expoſition makes the words a Prophecy of the Uniting of *Judah* and *Iſrael* in the Old-Teſtament Service appointed of God. The latter holds them forth as a Prophecy of the Uniting of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, by the taking away of the *Partition*-wall of Old-Teſtament Worſhip by which

which they had been ſo long ſeparated the one from the other.

This latter expoſition ſeems the more probable:

1. Becauſe the uſing of ſo many expreſſions (as it were) for the outing of the Ark, may be conceived to ſuggeſt and ſignifie rather the decay and vaniſhing of the Old-Teſtament Worſhip, *Heb.* 8.13. than a concurrence in it; and that in the days of the Meſſiah, when by the preaching of the Goſpel Believers ſhould be multiplied, *Act.*5. 14. all thoſe old ceremonial things that formerly were highly prized (becauſe ordained of God, and of very good uſe to the people of God then ſhould (as the words import * in the laſt part of this verſe) be *no more magnified*, as they were before, by the peoples viſits from all parts; I ſay, they ſhould be no more magnified, nor mentioned in compariſon with that Worſhipping of God in ſpirit and truth which the Goſpel ſhould bring in, *Joh.*4.23,24. *Phil.*3.3,4,5,8. So that will be ſomewhat like that other Prophecy (extended alſo to Goſpel-times) *Jer.*23.7,8. *They ſhall no more ſay, The Lord liveth that brought the children out of Egypt*, but *that brought them*

* Marg.

them out of the North, that is, one ſhould not be named (as it were) on the ſame day with the other. No more ſhould the Old-Teſtament Adminiſtration being compared with the New-Teſtament Conſtitution, at the time of Reformation, *Heb.9.14.* or rather (becauſe the deliverance out of *Egypt* is ever to be remembred as a real help to Faith and Obedience in all ages) it is like that of the Prophet *Haggai*, *Chap.2.7,8,9.* who informs us that the latter Houſe ſhould be incomparably, greater than the former; becauſe though there was abundance of Silver and Gold in the firſt Temple built by *Solomon*, yet the ſecond Temple was far more glorious and deſirable, becauſe Chriſt the deſire of all Nations came to it: So that the more of Chriſt there is in any thing the leſs conſiderable it makes any other thing wherein he is not, or wherein he is leſs; what was the Ark to *Noah* (the Jewel laid up in that Cabinet) O what is any Ark, and how unworthy to be named in compariſon of Jeſus Chriſt!

2. This latter Expoſition may be preferred, becauſe though the Tribe of *Judah* returned out of Captivity and did encreaſe and multiply in their own Land; yet the body of *Iſrael* did not return (albeit

beit there were ſome of that body mixed with them) to join with *Judah* in the Temple-Service.

3. Becauſe it is ſaid here that *all the nations ſhall be gathered to the name of the Lord, v.* 17. which tho ſome apply to the ten Tribes as being a numerous company, 2 *Chron.*13.8. yet becauſe of the latitude of the expreſſion, and the uſe of it in other parts of Scripture, it ſeems more properly to denote all Nations generally, or all nations indifferently, and ſo to include both *Jews* and *Gentiles* meeting together and cloſing one with another in the Evangelical Worſhip, in that new *Jeruſalem*, which is the mother of us all, *Gal.*4.26.

Yet theſe two Expoſitions may be in ſome ſort conjoined, if we make the Conjunction of the *Jews* and thoſe of *Iſrael* that returned with them out of Captivity and their aſſociating one with another in the *Jeruſalem*-worſhip, a glympſe, Fore-runner, and fore-ſhewer of that greater gathering together both of *Jews* and *Gentiles* in the latter days.

So that the deſires of all Nations in Goſpel-times ſhould be, not the ſhadows of Chriſt, but Jeſus Chriſt himſelf and that Name of his which is as Ointment poured

poured forth, of so good a savour that they have hard hearts, yea harlots hearts that are not taken with him, for they that are Virgins do therefore love him, *Cant.* 1.3.

Jer.6.16.

Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the way, and see and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your Souls.

Q. *WHat's the way to Soul-rest.*

A. It is Gods way; Its he that guides to the way of peace, concerning which two things may be inquired. Luk.17.9.

1. How Peace is had in Gods way.

2. What that Peace is that is so had.

1. Q. What is to be done to get rest in Gods way?

A: It's had by standing still to find it, and by walking in it when we have found it.

1. By standing, and searching to descry Gods way; as doubtful Travellers stand still (as being at a stand) to observe Coast of the Countrey, look all about, ask of all about them, or that come near them

them, that so they may get the knowledg of the right way; So are we to look about into the whole Word of God when we doubt what to do, and make all enquiry to find out Gods way, *Isa.*8.20. *Mal.*4.4. Besides, the words here used *Stand, see, ask*, Seem to shew that God grants men a liberty to look all about; and if they can find a better way than his is, and a way that will bring them more rest than his will, then let them take it, as *Josh.*24.15. *Ruth.*1.15.

Joh.3.59. Joh.16.19.

If any enquire further, How may we be directed in this search the better to find out Gods way? The Text will herein resolve us, by setting before us two marks and Characters of it: For it is,

1. *The old path*] as old as *Moses*, yea as *Adam*, elder than all sin and errour: For Gods way was first delivered to innocent *Adam*, before sin entred into the world, yea that it might not enter and so his trouble might be prevented, and there might be no hinderance of his rest; But man went out of Gods way, brake his law, lost his ease; yet did God of old, even immediately after the sin of man, reveal his Gospel-truth for the recovery of that rest, *Mat.*11.28. which man by his sin and breaking the Law had lost

loſt, *Gen.*3.15. The oldeſt way (older than the Devil who abode not in the truth, *John* 8.44. and therefore was after it) is the way of truth, made known by the God of truth, and carrying a light in it, ſerving and ſufficing to diſcover every falſe way; concerning which we may ſay as our Saviour doth, *From the beginning it was not ſo*, *Mat.*19.8.

2. It is *the good way*] and that three ways, to wit, as being good, making good, and bringing good.

1. As being good] that is, good in it ſelf, and ſo it muſt needs be becauſe it is the way of God, *Pſ.*18.30. *Rom.*12. 2. *Micah* 6.8. *Pſal.*119.140. The word and way of *Jehova* is like the gold of *Havilah*, *Gen.*2.11. yea, good above the fineſt gold, *Pſ.*119.127. Iſa. 39.8.

2. Making good] for they that walk in the law of the Lord do no iniquity, *Pſal.*119.1,2,3.9. The way of truth and of the God of truth keeps us from every falſe way, if we follow it, *Pſal.*119.104. The very end of Preaching the Word, and holding forth the way of God, *is to make mens ways and doings good*, *Jer.*18.11.

3. Bringing good] *Job* 22.21,22. Good comes by acquaintance with God, and laying up his word in our hearts, and

turning to his way, *v.*23. In doing of that which is good men poſſeſs that which is good, *Deut.*6.18. ſee 2 *Chron.* 31.20,21.

2. Peace is had in Gods way by *Walking in it*, Deut.5.32,33. No man diſpatcheth a journey to do himſelf good by knowing the way but by going in it: If men ſay (as here they do) *we will not walk*, v. 16. then there is no reſt; any more than a travelling Woman hath, but *fear on every ſide*, which way ſoever they walk, *v.* 24,25. Peace and Wickedneſs can never ſtand together, *Iſa.* 57.20,21. but as many as walk according to the rule of the Word, *Peace ſhall be on them*, Gal.6. 16.

Luk 12. 47.48. John 13. 17.

Thus how Reſt is had in Gods way.

2. Qu. *What is that Reſt and Peace that is ſo had?*

A. To this I anſwer, that it is a Peace of Heart and Conſcience, or a Soul-reſt, founded on the knowledg and belief of the word and way of God, with the ordering of our way and walk according to his word and will, *Pſ.*119.165.

1. Its founded on the faithful knowledg of the Word of God (ſuppoſing ſuch a walking in conformity thereunto as is before mentioned). In the knowledg of

of any truth, there ariseth to the lovers of truth much quietness of mind, and heart-rejoycing, * much more doth the truth of God which is more certain, more sweet and more excellent, give content to an holy heart, as it did to David, *Ps.* 119.14,16,29,30. to Christs Disciples, *John* 16. 18, 19, 29, 30, and to *Paul*; 1 *Cor.*2.2. *Phil.*3.8. Now when Faith doth further fix upon, not only the truth but the goodness of the Word (especially of the word of promise) that is an exceeding great stay, and settledness to the shaking heart, as we see in the words of the Lord delivered by *Hezechia*, on which they leaned when they were ready to fall and faint, 2 *Chron.*32.7,8. so also in the words of *Azariah*, 2 *Chron.*15.7,8. whereby also *David* took heart in the utmost extremity, 1 *Sam.*30.6.

* εὐφρὰνα

In this way, that is, the faithful knowledge of Gods way, followed with walking therein, much and manifold Rest and Comfort ariseth to the heart and conscience; as namely,

1. By Illumination, and that Light which guideth our feet into the way of peace, *Luk.* 1.78. and thereby setteth the heart in a state of peace, *Act.* 20.24. Bonds and afflictions made no Commoti-

ons in *Pauls* heart becauſe he was in that way, and ſtill finiſhing the courſe of his Miniſtery, which he received from the Lord Jeſus. More particularly, Divine Light quieteth us: 1. By reſolution when we are in the dark in our judgments, and full of perplexing thoughts; thus it was with the afflicted Prophet that was ſo grieved in heart, and puzzled with wicked mens Proſperity, whom the Sanctuary cured and fully quieted, *Pſal.* 73. 16, 17. 28. 2. By conviction and revocation, when by corruption and tentation, we are ruſhing into ways and works of darkneſs. Thus was *Davids* heart ſtil'd and fil'd with reſt, and rejoycing when *Abigila* took him off from his furious purpoſe, and ſet him right, 1 *Sam.* 25. 31, 32, 33. See the like, *Joſh.* 22. 33.

Pſal. 7. 3. verſ. 21.

2. By Juſtification, through the Revelation of the Righteouſneſs of God made ours by Faith, that is, ſuch a Faith as works by Love, which is the old and good and great way of Salvation, in which whoſoever walk, peace ſhall be (ſure) on them and in them, *Gal.* 6. 16. with chap 5, 6. *Rom.* 5. 1. *Luk.* 7. 50.

3. By Sanctification, which is through the truth, *Joh.* 17. 17. and the knowledg and acknowledgment of Gods way, which is

is the way of Holineſs, *Iſa.* 35. 8. which whoſoever walk in, they ſhall have great quietneſs of mind both in life and in death, *Pſal.* 25. 12, 13. *Iſa.* 38. 3. Beſides, that when turbulent luſts are mortified (which is done in the way of God revealed in the word, *Pſal.* 119. 133.) there is much Serenity in the Soul, as there was in Davids, 1 *Sam.* 25. 32, 33. yea every act of Holineſs is followed with an inward peace and acquieſcence, *Pſal.* 119. 165. 2 Cor. 1. 13.

4. By the comfortable State of things as to mens outward condition; for when things go well, and there is a reſt of State, there is much more reſt in the heart; and all goes well when men walk in Gods way, 2 *Chron.* 14. 5, 6, 7. and 15. 5. 15. *Iſ.* 30. 15. 2 *Chron.* 16. 9. Jer. 22. 15.

5. There's an unſpeakable Soul-reſt, by the aſſurance of that bleſſed State in heaven, the aſſurance and enjoyment whereof is obtained in a way of Holineſs, *Rom.* 6. 22. 2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8. *Job.* 19. 25. *Tit.* 2. 12, 13. *Pſal.* 16. 9, 10, 11.

Jer. 7. 22, 23.

I ſpake not to your Fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out

of the land of Egypt, concerning Burnt-offerings or Sacrifices, but this thing I commanded them saying, obey my voice, &c.

Qu. *Did not God command the Passeover and other Sacrifices and ceremonial things in the old Testament?*

A. First, It's clear that he did command them as things to be observed in all the time of the old Testament for the education and assistance of that people, who were best led by such outward things to those Spiritual things which were therein held forth unto them. See the Commands, *Exod.* 12. 17. 42. and *Exod.* 13. 5. 10. 2 *Chron.* 30. 5. there was a writing for for the Passeover: So also, 2 *Chron.* 35. 4,6. And for other Sacrifices, we find the Lords precise order in the book of *Leviticus*, *Lev.* 1.2. so that it was a sin for them and against the plain Commandment of God to omit that way of Worship; yea, *Solomon* declareth this as one difference between the righteous and the wicked, that the one *Sacrificeth*, and the other Sacrificeth not, *Eccl.* 9. 11. yet,

Secondly, It may be said in divers respects that the Lord did not command them, that is,

1. Not

1. Not for perpetuity and as things that he would have to continue in all times, as he ever did, doth and will, moral obedience; now therefore (in theſe Goſpel-times) there is Obedience preſcribed, 2 *Cor.* 10. 56, but no Sacrifices permitted; now there are Spiritual, not carnal Ordinances; now there is Truth and not old-Teſtament-Types, *Joh.* 4. 23, 24.

2. God did never command Sacrifices abſtractively, that is, as ſeparated from the Spiritual Subſtance, but in relation thereunto, and as fruits and furtherances thereof. Sacrifices ſet before them

1. Their ſin and guilt] The beaſt to be killed (in their room, as it were) ſhewed they deſerved to die.

2. Their Saviour and Ranſom, for as they deſerved to be kild in ſtead of the beaſt (there's their guilt); ſo the beaſts was kil'd for and in ſtead of them; there's their reſcue, and the type of their Redeemer. Now this being ſo, Gods Command, and intent in regard of Sacrifices, was, that they ſhould bring with them 1. Repentance, in regard of their ſin; *Levit.* 16. 21. 2. Faith in reſpect of their Saviour, *Pſal.* 4. 5. And he commanded no Sacrifices without and ſet apart from theſe; ſo now we may ſay, God com-

mands not fasting as it is a forbearing of a meals meat, but as an help to repentance and prayer. They therefore that abstract bodily exercises from their end, must go to him for their wages that sets them a-work; for God commands them to do no outward things in that nature; we find him therefore disclaiming all Sacrifices in that sense, and as so us'd and abused, that is, offered to God instead of obedience; and saith (as here) Who hath required (or commanded) them? *Isa.* 1. 11, 12, *&c.* It's another thing that *the Lord requires*, and that's Obedience, *Mic.* 6. 7, 8.

Decem variis phrasibus Ames in Psal. 50. 6, 8.

3. As God did not command them solely and without Obedience, so neither chiefly (if we put obedience and them together) and in that respect he may be said not to command them, according to that, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice*; that is, My will is not to have the one without the other, nor the one in comparison of the other: Hence God (where he purposly handleth this argument, to wit, *Psal.* 50. 5, 8.) tells his people, *I will not reprove thee for thy Sacrifices*, (when yet the want of what is required, is to be reproved) for God looks higher, and will have a *Covenant made* and confirmed by

For, *Hoc si illud conferatur, nihil est.*

Sa-

Sacrifice; requiring Sacrifices only as appurtenances of Covenanted Obedience. We may obſerve alſo in Scripture, that the ſpiritual ſubſtance hath been accepted without the outward Ceremony, even then when Ceremonies were moſt in requeſt, (2 *Chron.* 30. 18, 19.) but when Sacrifice hath been pleaded without Obedience, or to be a protection for diſobedience, God hath extreamly diſliked it. 1 *Sam.* 15. 21, 22, 23.

4. God never ſo commanded Sacrifices and outward Ceremonies, as if he would be the God of the *Jews*, and they ſhould be his people, and all ſhould be well with them, if they brought him Sacrifices and Burnt-offerings: he never agreed with them upon ſuch terms, but (as it is here ſaid) upon the *obeying of his voice, and walking in all the ways that he commanded them*, v. 23. See therefore how the Covenant runs, *Deut.* 26. 17. *Thou haſt avouched the Lord this day to be thy God*; and what then? *to walk in his ways, keep his ſtatutes, and hearken to his voice.* Again, (on the other ſide) *The Lord hath avouched thee to be his peculiar people, as he hath promiſed thee*, v. 18. But is that all? No; but, *That thou ſhouldeſt keep all his Commandments.*

Out-

Opus operatum is but *cadaver.*

Outward Exercises (though required of God) are but the body, it is Grace that is in the Soul (and if it be there, will shew it self in the life) of the Servant, which is the Soul of the service.

Jer. 12. 5.

If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?

Q. *What may the meaning of these words be?*

Calvin.

A. 1. Some take them as spoken by the Lord to his Prophet, to this end that the people might know by him what they were to suffer from their enemies, from whom though they had suffered much already, so that their Country was miserably wasted, and their City impaired (which may be compared to *running with the footmen*) yet they must expect far heavier things, even an utter desolation of their Country, destruction of their City and Temple, and carrying away of themselves by the *Chaldeans* out of their own Land, (which may be compared to

con-

contending with horſes, becauſe they exceeded in ſtrength all former enemies. This *Jeremy* muſt let them know that they ſhould not deceive themſelves with a vain hope of Peace, but rather prepare for the higheſt troubles. Hereunto is adjoined the ſixth verſe, as ſhewing the Prophet himſelf what he ſhould ſtill ſuffer from his own Country-men. So that whereas *Jeremy* was an earneſt (though a modeſt) diſputer, *ver.* 1. theſe words may reſolve and reſtrain him; for ſo hath God appointed by reaſon of the wickedneſs and incorrigibleneſs of his People, that wicked men from without ſhall be proſperous in deſtroying them, *Hab.* 1: 12, 13. and wicked men within the Church ſhall vex and perſecute the godly Prophets and Party, and ſo haſten their own ruin, when in the mean-time, God will ſufficiently ſecure his own, notwithſtanding all the treacheries of ungodly men. But,

2. Others carry the Compariſon thus: in *Judah* there were two ſorts, 1. *Foot-men*, that is, men (in compariſon) more ſlow and low, and weak in their oppoſition; and (as it is in the latter part of the verſe) ſuch as are like a *land of peace* not fortified, or formidable as Cities of War *Junius Tram.*

War are, or like the waters of *Siloah* that run ſoftly, that is, are leſs violent. 2. *Horſemen*, that is, ſwift and ſwelling Perſecutors; both theſe made up an Army to fight againſt God and his Servants only; theſe latter obſerved no moderation, but were like *Jordan* when it riſeth up in his ſtrength, and overfloweth its banks and bounds; and like thoſe waters, *Iſa.* 8. 6. Whereas therefore *Jeremy* complained much of the men of *Anathoth*, and reaſoned the caſe with the righteous God, how men ſo evil in their way could be ſo proſperous in their condition; the Lord ſeems to tell him that he muſt not be over-tender, but rather expect greater oppoſition than wonder at this; if he be wearied by entring the liſts with Countrymen, men of lower place, and power, and ſpirits; how ſhall he hold it out to contend with the Court, with the Grandees there, with their miry Dungeons, and continual threats of death, and ſlanderous accuſations, as if no man more deſerved it? *Jer.* 7. 14. & 38. 4.

Now, though that deſcription of the *Aſſyrian*, Iſa. 8. 6. may ſeem to favour the former ſenſe (as alſo that *Jer.* 49. 19.) conſidering how like it is to the cloſe of this verſe, yet this latter is choſen by moſt as

as the most plain and proper means. And it is made the more probable by the Connexion of the sixth verse, with a *for*, mentioning the men of *Anathoth*, with whom weary *Jeremy* was now running; as also because we find a like check given to the Prophets despondency, *Jer.* 15. 18, 19.

This is not without use to us; we are always apt to think that still it will be better; whereas when God declares himself otherwise in his word, and the wickedness of a People discovers it self to all the World, it will be our wisdom to think that (probably) it will still be worse; that when God begins he will make an end, 1 *Sam.* 3. 12. and that the present troubles are but *the beginning of sorrows*, *Mat.* 24. 8. Now if we cannot bear the beginnings, how shall we bear the proceedings? If when there is some peace for present, a mixture of trouble be intolerable to us, what shall we do in the overflowings of *Jordan*, and all-overwhelming publick inundations? If we cannot endure the fire in *Nebuchadnezzars* face, *Dan.* 3. 19. how shall we endure his Furnace?

Q. *What help is there to look encreasing troubles in the face, and to bear up when the*

the Sea of this world is most boisterous?

A. The same grounds of Christian resolution and consolation will serve for support in a greater as well as in a less affliction. That which *Jeremy* builds upon, *Jer.* 20. 11. is sufficient to keep him in heart in the Court as well as in the Country, among the Horsmen as among the Footmen. What makes men take joyfully the spoiling of their goods (to wit, that they have *a better and a more enduring substance in heaven*, Heb. 10. 34.) that also will make them *resist to blood*, Heb. 12.4. for that brings them quickly to that inheritance. Less sufferings for Religion (as scourging, *Act.* 5. 41.) will not be chearfully endured, but upon those noble grounds, the Glory of God, 1 *Pet.*3.14. the name of Christ, the honour, 1 *Pet.* 4. 14. and reward of those that suffer for Christ and Christianity, *Mat.* 5. 11, 12. 2 *Tim.* 2.12. And these things will make men endure any thing, as the scourged Apostles, *Act.* 5.41. did the cruelest deaths, *Act.* 12.2. *Joh.* 16.19. with *Act.* 5.29.

And as concerning any outward affliction, if we do by Faith take in those cordials, *Heb.* 12. 6, to 12. to wit, that it comes from the love of our Lord, *ver.* 6. from the hand of a Father, shewing we are

Sons

Sons (*ver.7.*) and not Bastards. *ver.*8. Yea from the Father of Spirits (as well as of, and more especially and eminently of, than of our flesh) who subjecteth us to his correction, *that we may live* (v.9) and not be condemned with the world, 1 *Cor.* 11. 32. Yea, that it is for our profit here as being made thereby *partakers of his holiness*, (v.10.) And possest of the *peaceable fruit of righteousness*, (v.11.) I say if things be believed, and withal that *a rest remains for the people of God*, Heb. 4. 9. What will not be endured?

Not that all can endure alike, not but that a stronger Faith will bear great afflictions with greater fortitude, as *Stephen*, *Act.* 6. 8, 15. (and therefore we should labour to get more and more degrees of Faith) but the weakest true Faith will bear all affliction, without an utter failing and falling from God; as these Scriptures shew, *Luk.* 22. 33. *Rom.* 14. 4. 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. *Rev.* 3. 8.

Jer. 20. 14, to the end.

Cursed be the day wherein I was born, let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed, &c.

Q. *How is it possible that so holy a man*

as

as Jeremy *was should speak such strange and truculent words as these are, and that (as the Context hath it) immediately after his praising of God, and calling in others thereunto*, ver. 13?

A. First, As for the latter part of the Question, some Expositors do not conjoin *v.* 13. *&* 14. but take what is spoken from *v.* 14. to the end of the Chapter, as that which arose from the impulsion of a new temptation. But *Calvin* conceives that this is brought in to amplifie the comfort he had from a gracious God, by declaring how he was affected and transported with the bruitish carriage of ungracious men; so that the words though in the order of the Text, put after the praising of God, *v.* 13. yet in order of time, and of the story, go before, and shew in what a miserable case, distress, and even distraction he was before the Lord appeared to him for the setting of his tormented spirit in some good order and peaceable frame. Briefly, till God gave him satisfaction, no language was bitter enough to express his dissatisfactions.

Secondly, For the matter of his speech (as here it lies before us) it is as high and as highly against the Rule as can well be imagined, and that both in respect of him-

himself, and of man, and of God himself.

1. In respect of himself, he curseth the day of his Birth, when it is a singular mercy of God for any man to have a being, for otherwise how could he have an everlasting well-being? and men of note generally have celebrated their Birth-day, *Mark* 6. 21. with feasting and much rejoycing. Yea Gods mercy to *Jeremy* was the greater, because before he came out of that womb out of which he wisheth here he had never come, God sanctified him, *Gal.* 1. 15, 16. set him apart for an eminent service, and ordained him to be a Prophet, not only to the people of God (to whom he was a Prophet properly) but to the *Nations* round about, to whom his Prophesies reach'd, by whom they were taken notice of, *Jer.* 40. 2. and among whom they produced high and most remarkable effects, *Jer.* 1. 5, 10. 1 Tim. 1. 12.

2. In respect of man, that is, that man (which may be understood of this or that man) that brought tydings to his Father, *a man-child is born, making him very glad.* In such a case men might pay the Messenger, but *Jeremy* abhors the Messenger and Message both, yea, the Messenger for the Message; and that in so high and horrid a degree that he wi-

shes him like the Cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, the most dreadful examples of Gods Justice, as being utterly overthrown without any repentance and restauration. And further prayeth, that he may *hear the cry* (an hideous cry, *Exod.* 12. 30.) in the *morning*, that is, early and unawares, *Hos.* 10. 15. and the shouting of noise (as of men overcome, *Exod.* 32. 18.) at *noontide*, when others use to rest and recreate themselves, 2 *Sam.* 4. 5.

3. In respect of God; for in the two last verses, he quarrels with him, because he did not kill him out of hand, and make his mothers womb his grave, and because she did not carry in it a Conception of eternity; that is, that should never be brought forth. When there was cause enough to say (considering how much good, *Jer.* 18.20. *Jeremy* did and would have done), O *blessed the womb that bare thee, and the paps that gave thee suck!*

It may be observed in all this, 1. That there is a great deal that can by no means be justified, that is greatly to be condemned, there being not only the most direful and injurious cursing of a man, or men most innocent, but also horrible blasphemy against God.

The Use whereof is, to shew what wild

wild and woful Creatures we be, when once we have given our selves the reins. *Jeremy* was a Prophet and a man of God, but he was a man also; as a Prophet, he thundred out divers imprecations against Gods enemies, which we may account acts of obedience to the Spirit of God in him, *Jer.* 20. 9. but here the man is become like one of us, he speaks like a very corrupt man, and casts up a great deal of mire and dirt. Sure he was a man subject to like passions with us, and so are we to like passions with him, though usually we use not such dreadful and daring expressions, but we have them in our hearts, they lie in our wicked natures, and out they come at times (when we are much wrong'd and wrung, *Prov.* 30. 33.) as far as our wit will reach (for all have not ability to be so mighty in words) and as far as shame will suffer. O what need to watch and pray that the Peace of God may rule in our hearts, and that we may be amicable, *Col.* 3. 15. when a *Jeremy* is so unamicable and implacable!

2. Yet that something there is, I say, something to extenuate that which can no way be excused: *viz.*

1. A natural temptation; because (as himself expresseth it, *v.* 18.) *he was brought*

Moses is put out of his patience by a froward people, Psal. 106. 33. *V de anne sit alius loci*, Sens. 9.

forth to such labour and sorrow, and his days were consumed with shame. This, though it be no sufficient defence for him, yet it may be look'd upon as a mitigation of his fault among men that know themselves to be in such sort moved (though not in such an height, because all men have not the like fiery affections) with such temptations: Oppression and ignominy makes a wise man mad, and a godly man fierce, 2 *Sam.* 10. 4, 5. & 12. 31.

2. A moral and spiritual foundation and rise of this his rising so high; there was (as it is suppos'd, and it cannot be but that there was) some good at the bottom, (as there was in *Nehemiah's* cursing and rough discipline, (*Chap.* 13. 25.) we may presume that it was not only his own case and barbarous usage; but Gods cause that made him so to transgress his bounds, and to be zealous beyond knowledg; herein he may be more excus'd than *Job*, who also curs'd the day of his birth, but it arose from his present misery, *Job* 3. 20, 24. but *Jeremy* looks like *Jonah* that was so froward and high with God, because he supposed he should be accounted a false Prophet by his threatening and Gods sparing of *Niniveh*; so *Jeremy* saw here that not only his person was oppo-

sed

sed but his Ministry, and that therein God and all Religion was trodden under foot, which was so horrible a thing to him that it was tedious to him to live, while he lived longer and longer to see God and Goodness more and more trodden under foot.

4. And this also may be added (that *Jeremy* may not be low in our eyes) that he was a man of a most vigorous and keen spirit, his affections wrought like new Wine, *Chap.*4.19. & 24.9. the zeal of Gods house did eat him up, yea zeal for God was at the bottom of these exceedings: No marvel if *Luther* and such renowned Worthies that marched furiously for God, were sometimes too furious, and if they that had so much of heavenly fire had something also of strange fire; for the best have flesh in them as well as spirit, and it's an hard thing for any man not to act according to his natural temper and constitution, sometimes in a worse way as well as ordinarily in a better: O how extreamly dull are they in action that are free from the extremity of passion! O how may our coldness and lukewarmness move us to put a charitable Interpretation upon their words and actions that have been hot for Hea-

ven, though now and then scalding hot.

But though all this may be said for *Jeremy*, yet nothing can plead sufficiently for such headlong passion, nor for any that imitate him in it, albeit they come far short of the height of it.

Jer. 28.2,3,4.

Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, *saying, I have broken the yoke of the King of Babylon; within two full years, I will bring again into this place, all the Vessels of the Lord and all the Captives of* Judah, &c. v.4.

Qu. *When one Prophet said one thing, and another did (with as much confidence) say a contrary thing, yea, when many speak good, and one* Jeremiah, *evil; How could People know which to believe?*

A. They might very well know, if they were not willing to shut their eyes; for,

1. The Prophets were but Interpreters of the Law of God; and tho they had divers immediate and particular revelations, yet all suited with, and confirmed the written Word; Now that Law and Word of God, threateneth all evil to Idolaters and men wicked and cruel in their carriage.

age. The *Jews* therefore being ſuch at this time (as the Scripture often ſhews, and therein gives a reaſon of the Judgments threatned againſt them, ſee *Jer.*8. 15. & 20.8. & 5.19. & 13.22,) I ſay, they being ſo abominably bad, they could not but judg (Looking to the Word of God) *Deut.* 29. 24, 25. &c. & 31. 29. that they ſpeak moſt truly that ſpeak moſt terribly to them.

Obj. *But if a ſinful people repent, good is ſtill promiſed in the whole Word of God,* Deut.4.29,30,31.

A. True; but we find not that theſe falſe Prophets ſpeak a word to move the People to repentance (as *Jeremiah* ſtill did, *Chap.* 18.8,11. & 26.3.) And ſo, they left them uncapable of any good. And this will ever be the difference between a true and a falſe Prophet, that a falſe Prophet promiſeth a good condition without urging the condition of Obedience, but the true Prophet preacheth all evil, if there be not amendment, and no good condition but upon that condition.

2. This people were or might have been, convinc'd in their own Judgment and Conſciences, that *Jeremy* ſpake true, and they that oppoſed him, untruths:

For 1. unbyassed and more judicious men, as namely the Princes, *Jer.* 26.16.) acknowledged, and that when this controversy was on foot; yea and all the people said to the Priests and the Prophets that opposed *Jeremy*, that he did indeed and truly speak unto them, *in the name of the Lord their God.*

2. Their own experience might set them right; for divers Evils whereof *Jeremy* had prophecied were already come upon them, *Jechoniah*, and many with him being carried Captives to *Babylon*, and the vessels of the Temple also carried away thither already: see *Jer.*27.16. & 28. 4.

3. They have here in this Chapter an evident and eminent example of the wrath of God upon, and in the Death of this wicked *Hananiah*, and that by the Word of *Jeremiah*, declaring he should die because of his lying Prophecy, whereby in stead of calling the people to Repentance and Submission to the King of *Babylon*, (and therein to God himself) he taught them to rebel *v.* 16,17. So that the controversy was decided from Heaven, and it might easily be known which was the truer Prophet, because God sent a sentence from Heaven (which was speedily

execu-

executed) againſt *Hananiah* by *Jeremiah*, and that becauſe he contradicted the truth that *Jeremy* had delivered.

3. *Jeremy* was not the firſt nor the only Prophet that threatned thus; *Micah* and *Urijah* have been named before who Prophecied *according to all the words of Jeremiah*, Chap. 26.20. yea the true Prophets generally ſpeak ſucceſſively ſuch things, ſo that *Jeremy* cannot be looked upon as ſingle in what he ſaid.

4. *Jeremiah* ſpake uſually and conſtantly the ſame ſad things with the danger of his life, *Jer.* 26.8. but they that ſpake ſmooth things had the applauſe of the people, *Micah.* 2.11. now it's liker that a ſufferer ſhould ſpeak truth than a flatterer. And though men may ſometimes ſuffer for a falſhood, yet it is not with that confidence and magnanimity with which they ſuffer that give teſtimony to the truth of God, *Jer.* 26.14,15. Now for Ordinary Miniſters:

1. Some perhaps are willing they ſhould differ in points of Religion that that may be an excuſe for them for their being of no Religion till all be agreed, yea (it may be) ſome that they may have ſomewhat to ſay to plead for a Pope to determine all controverſies.

Others

2. Others are ſo unwilling that they ſhould differ in any thing, that they ſuffer themſelves to be weakened in their Religion by ſome diſſents among Miniſters the upholders of it; or (indeed) becauſe they are not ſo careful as they ſhould be to ſeek that reſolution that may be had, nor ſo willing as were meet, to exerciſe Conſcience in the ſtrength of the general directions of Scripture (wherein all agree) and with the moſt earneſt prayers to God for the determining of things to themſelves as far as their neceſſity requires, and as they are called to act.

Both theſe may know that the difference between learned and godly Miniſters, is in leſs things not ſo clearly determined in Scripture, and ariſeth from their weakneſs, and the different diſpenſations of God's Spirit, whereby ſome of them have more light and ſight than others can attain: But this is no juſt cauſe of doubting of, nor impediment of Walking in, the neceſſaryand ſaving Truths and Ways of God, wherein the Scripture is clear, and the Miniſters of Chriſt conſent.

Briefly, They that take the courſe that the *Beræans* did, that is, *ſearch the Scriptures*, reverently, conſcientiouſly, and ſin-

sincerely, will never be deceived by any lying *Hananiah*, but discern a clear difference between a *Paul*, preaching in the evidence and demonstration of the Spirit of God, and all other erroneous Teachers that bring forth the Brats of their own brain, and vent the inventions and imaginations of their own corrupt hearts, 1 *Thess.* 5.21.

Jer. 29. 7.

And seek the peace of the City whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it, for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace.

Q. Why should the people of God seek and pray for the peace of Babylon *wherein they were miserable Captives?*

A. For the answer of this Question, two things are to be considered: 1. What is meant by seeking, and seeking to God for the peace of that City. 2. For what reason they were to do it?

First, In this seeking and praying for the peace of the City, two things are comprehended.

1. Seeking, studying and praying for, the peace of the King, whose Subjects now they were, because God delivered them,

them, and expreſly required them to deliver themſelves into his hand, *Jer.* 21.8,9. And Subjects are to pray for their life, *Ezra* 6. 10. and welfare, whoſe Subjects they are, (albeit they be Heathens and Tyrants), by Gods expreſs command, 1 *Tim.* 2. 1, 2. Nor is it in vain in reſpect of Subjects themſelves; becauſe by this means, 1. God is engaged in his own way of Prayer, for their better governing, and that thoſe under them may lead a quiet and a peaceable life, 1 *Tim.* 2. 2. Hence even Pagan Princes are reſtrained, and do leſs evil, and more good; as upon *Daniel's* prayers, his and his fellows lives were ſaved; and they by his means (through the good ſucceſs of his and their prayers with God, relating to the King, and the action then in hand) were received into favour and promoted, no doubt to the benefit and faring better of the whole Church of God, *Dan.* 2. 18, 23, 46, 48, 49. In this way alſo King *Ahaſuerus* reverſed his own Decree, at leaſt made a contrary Decree, and ſo *Eſther*, *Mordecai*, and the *Jews* were delivered, and *Haman* hanged. Thus alſo praying, *Neh.* 4. 9. *Nehemiah* (*Chap.* 1. 11. & 2. 4.) had favour and aſſiſtance from the Heathen-King for building the Walls of *Jeruſalem.*

ruſalem. 2. Such Prayers may work for the Converſion of Church-oppreſſing Princes (eſpecially in Goſpel-times wherein God would have all (of what Nation or Condition ſoever) to be ſaved, 1 *Tim.* 2. 4. 3. Howſoever, much hath been done in this way for Heathens conviction, and for the honour of the true God, *Dan.* 2. 18, 47. *&* 6. 10, 26, 27.

Whereunto may be referred the obtaining of rain by the Prayers of a Legion of Chriſtian Soldiers under *Aurelius* the Emperour, when elſe his Army was like to have periſhed, which was more than all their Heathen-gods could help them to, *Jer.* 14. 22. 4. Yea, the praying Captives at length ſo prevailed, *Jer.* 29. 12, 13, 14. that they had free liberty to return out of Captivity into their own Country and City to repair it, and to build a ſecond Temple there, *Ezra* 1. 2, 3. *&* 6. 12, 15.

Fulminea Legio, Euſeb. l. 5 c. 5.

2. This contains not only praying for the King, on whom depends the welfare of the State, but alſo for the State of *Babylon*, on which depended the welfare of the King. This proſperity of the State may be ſet forth by *the peace of the City*, the glory and ſafety of the State being therein ſeated, *Pray for the peace of Jeruſalem,*

ſalem, Pſal. 122.6. is (in effect) to pray for *Iſraels* welfare, and for the whole ſtate of the *Jews*; for inferiour places are the Daughters, *Ezek.* 16. 48. the chief City is the Mother, and the Daughters ſtand or fall with the Mother-city. If the principal City be left, though many other Cities be taken, there may be a reparation, but all's loſt when that's ruined, as the *Babyloniſh* Empire was when this City *Babylon* was taken, *Dan.* 5. 30, 31. *Func. Anno Mundi* 3425.

Thus we ſee what they were to ſeek and pray for.

Secondly, Followeth the reaſon why they were ſo to do, *for in the peace thereof ye ſhall have peace*: So that when they prayed for the peace of *Babylon*, they prayed for themſelves, and for the Church of God now imbodied there; where alſo they were (by Gods command here, *v.* 5, 6.) to build, plant, marry, and be encreaſed; and where they became (afterward) ſo well accommodated, that they were loth to come from thence (though at Gods call) into their own Country, beſet with enemies; foreſeeing that they might abide in *Babylon* with more eaſe, *Zach.* 2.6. But whilſt Gods will was that they ſhould be there, his will alſo was that they ſhould

ſeek

ſeek the peace of that which was now their own place; as a man bound in Priſon, hath reaſon to pray for the preſervation of the Priſon, leſt if that be fired, he be burnt; and ſo *Jonah* and *Paul* for the preſervation of the Ships wherein they ſailed.

This Command may mind us of ſome other things, *viz.*

1. That it is not unlawful, but allowed us to pray for our own peace and proſperity, 1 *Chron.* 4. 10. but eſpecially it is a great duty to pray for the Churches peace, *Pſal.* 122. 6. & 51. 18. & 137. 5, 6. Yet is there a further end to be aimed at in this, that is the glory and ſervice of God, *Pſal.* 51. 19. & 122. 9. *Gen.* 28. 21, 22.

2. That when we cannot have the peace we would have, we muſt pray to God for the peace we may have. If we cannot have peace in *Zion*, we muſt ſeek (and therefore thank God for *Pſal.* 50. 15.) peace in *Babylon*, peace in a Priſon, and praiſe God the more if he give it there, *Act.* 16. 25.

3. And we may mind this alſo, that it runs croſs to this Command, not to wiſh well to and pray heartily for the State and Land in which we live, eſpecially where-

in

in we live, not as Captives, but as Natives. As he that provides not for his own, so he that prays not for his own, comes short of Infidels, *Jon.* 3. 5, 6, *&c.* and (sure) of the Church here captivated among and under Infidels.

It's true that when there is a sad difference, and dispute between two Protestant Nations, there are two things (even by the prevailing party), to be mourned for: 1. The weakning of the Protestant Party, and the advantaging and encouraging of the Enemies of the Truth. 2. The greater misery of War which they that are vanquished must needs sustain: But yet comparing one State with another, if it be applied to the War between *England* and *Holland*, and the most fierce Sea-fight, *June* 8, 9, 10, *&c.* we have reason to take comfort in, and bless God for, the better success of our own, we being Protestants as well as they, and this being the land of our Nativity. Briefly, we are in such a case to rejoyce with trembling; to *rejoyce*, because of the undeserved favour of Divine Providence, wherein we are prefer'd; and yet with *trembling*, because we hew down a company that support true Religion together with our selves; and because Victory is gotten

gotten at so hard an hand, that we may see our sin in our success. See Calv. in loc.

Jer. 31.31, to v. 35.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant with the House of Israel *and with the house of* Judah; *Not according to the Covenant that I made with their Fathers* &c.

Qu. *Whence is it that* Jeremy *speaks of a new Covenant? what saith he of it, and how are we to judg of it?*

1. *A.* First, he speaks of it, (after much said of an outward fulness) to set forth that wherein the happiness of the Church especially consisteth; yea, which their outward Promises pointed at and were to lead them to, and proceeded from, to wit, the spiritual priviledges of the Covenant of Grace, to be enjoyed most in Gospel-days, and that by *Israel*, alienated from God, 2 *Chron.* 15.3. as it were by their rent from the house of *David*, and captivated before *Judah*; yet shall they (though not returning to their Land as *Judah* did) be conjoined, with *Judah* in the Spiritual comforts of the Covenant after the *Messiah* is come. *Ezek.* 37.17.

2 *Secondly*, that which he saith of it, is, 1. *First*, that it is *a new Covenant*, not for substance; for it was included and sum-

marily ſet forth in that old gray-headed Promiſe, the firſt in all the Bible, *Gen.*3. 15. And it is by the ſame Grace and Covenant of Grace, that we and the Fathers are ſaved, *Act.* 15. 11. *Lazarus* is taken into *Abraham's* boſom, and we ſhall ſit in the Kingdom of Heaven with *Abraham*, *Iſaak*, *Jacob*, and all the Prophets, *Luk.*13. 28. and that by vertue of this Covenant which was their Covenant, *Mat.*22.32. But though the ſubſtance be the ſame, yet there is divers ways a difference; and namely in two reſpects.

1. In regard of a new manner of Government, and thereby a new carriage and management of this Covenant, the Sacraments and Seals of the Covenant being different in the old and new-Teſtament, and the Service alſo; that of the Old-Teſtament being external and carnal, *Heb.*9.10. this of the new, ſpiritual, *Joh.* 4. 23, 24. yea the ſpiritual
Rom. 7. 14. Law of God was then written only in Tables of ſtone, ſo that the ſpirituality lay in the Law: But as the Tables on which the Law was written, remained ſtones ſtill; ſo the Heart (if we look only to that diſpenſation in which Grace was given, but not by which) was left (notwithſtanding all that the Law ſaid) hard and carnal;

carnal: but now in this new Covenant, there is not only an outward word but an inward ſpiritual work; and a print is left upon the ſpirit and inward parts, ſo that a regenerate Perſon ſaith truly, *Thy law is within my heart, it's in the midſt of my bowels*, Pſal 40.8.

2. In regard of the meaſure of grace, much more is given, and it's given unto more both Jews and Gentiles, *Joel.* 2.28. with *Act.* 2.16,17. *Matth.* 13.17. and from hence it is that there are more alſo of the fruits of the Spirit, *Iſa.* 44.4. and 61.3. *Phil.* 1.9, 10,11.

2. *Secondly*, The benefits of this new Covenant may be thus ſum'd-up.

1. Here's Juſtification and pardon of ſin, which though it be left to the laſt place, yet it's the bottom-promiſe, and therefore it comes in with a *For*, *v.* 34. as the foundation of all, and from whence flows the main and marrow of the Covenant, *viz. I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people*, v.33. Now people muſt needs be agreed before they be married, *Amos* 3.3. So God muſt forgive us before he received us, *Hoſ.* 14.2. The Covenant of of Works ſaith; *Thou muſt forbear ſin, and do none:* The Covenant of Grace ſaith, *I will forgive ſin and mark none*, Pſ. 130.4,3.

2. Here's Sanctification] *viz.* as Sanctification is taken in it's latitude, as 1 *Cor.*6. 11. so as to comprehend in it the whole work of Grace and change that there is in the new creature; so we may refer to it that which is here mentioned, *v.* 33,34. to wit, renovation and illumination.

1. Inward and *spiritual renovation*, 2 *Cor.*5.17. *I will put my Law into their inward parts.* In the Old-Testament the Law was written in stone, and *they brake it*, (though they had all the reason in the World to keep it, being newly brought out of *Egypt* and God being such a Lord to them as that he was also an Husband) *Isa.*54.5. Herein the Law was in no fault, *Rom.*7.12. Nor were they without fault; for their breaking of it arose from the rebellion of their hearts, for which God paid them home and shook them off, *Heb.* 8.9. But notwithstanding that they, through their wilful and froward Covenant-breaking, became altogether inexcusable; yet a further thing also is to be considered, to wit, that that (more legal) Covenant required all things strictly, but gave not from it self (as legal and considered as separated from this new Covenant) strength to do any thing: That Ministry was but a Ministry *of the letter*, wherein they

they might read much commanded, but it had no Spirit in it to help them to keep it, and so it kild them for not keeping it, 2 *Cor.*3.6. *Rom.*7.6. The Lord therefore in this new Covenant, takes a new course; here's the Ministry of the Spirit; whereby,

1. He makes the Tables himself (as he did the first Tables, *Deut.*5.22.) only, whereas they were Tables of stone, now he makes fleshy Tables, *Ezek.* 36.26. and having made them fit to receive his impressions,

2. He doth in two Tables, to wit, the mind and the heart and bowels, write not a new Law, but the same Law by his blessed Spirit, 2 *Cor.*3.3. whereby the heart of a regenerate man is formed and conformed in all Obedience to the holy Law of God. So that he is not only commandedand kept in order by theLaw in his Book without, but by a suitable Law within, in his mind and heart, *Rom.* 7.23. & 8.2. The Law saith, this is thy duty; true, (saith the regenerate Person) for I find it written in my heart, and my duty is my delight. *I delight in the law of God after the inward man*, Rom.7.22. Psal.40.8. *Psal.*37.30,31.

2. Besides this inward and spiritual re-

novation, there is added (we may say as that from which renovation and regeneration comes; for Christ gives life by giving light, *Ephes.*5.14. and which also comes from regeneration and renovation, *Rom.*12.2) I say, there is added *special illumination*, the Spirit in that way perfecting the work of Sanctification, *v.* 34. *They shall no more teach every man his neighbour*, &c. that is, *They shall be all taught of God*, *John* 6.45. and by reason of the Spirit, (the inward Teachers, *Joh.*2.27.) there shall be no such need as there was wont to be of outward Teaching. Ordinary People shall be like Prophets, *Joel.*2.28. and Prophets did not use to go to their Neighbours to seek knowledg; yet the meaning of this is not, that in the time of the Gospel, there should be no seeking or getting knowledg of others: For

1. The prophecy of Gospel-times shews they should call upon one another to go to be taught, *Isa.*2.3.

2. We find in the history of the Gospel that *Aquila* and *Priscilla* took *Apollo* (an eminent Preacher) to give him instruction, and that not without need, for he knew only the Baptism of *John*, *Act.* 18.25,26.

3. The Apostle requires the rich and right

right in-dwelling of the Word of God in the *Colossians*, that they *might teach and admonish one another*, Colos. 3.16.

4. And especially God that doth nothing without need, appointed the Apostles to go and *Teach* all Nations, *Matth.* 28.19,20. and still they taught, *Act.* 20.20. yea we find that they that were taught had need to be *taught again*, *Heb.* 5.12. yea, to be put in remembrance of what they know, 2 *Pet.* 1.12. And (to strike all dead) God hath appointed the calling of the Ministry for constant Teaching to the end of the World, *Mat.* 28.20. *Ephes.* 4.11,12,13. so that the meaning 1 *John* 2.27. is not absolutely, *No need* but *no such need.* As a Child asks his Father and fellows about every thing, being come to discretion, he doth not so: But (for all that) every wise-man asks advice. The Jews were children, We grown, who yet need to ask, but not *as they*. This will be more fully resolved by observing that the Scripture useth to express that *Negatively* which is to be understood only *Comparatively*: As *I will have mercy and not sacrifice*; when yet sacrifice was expressly required, but not principally, *Jer.* 7.22,23. so *Joh.* 9.41. & 15.22. Thus we say, that a child of a quick and preg-

nant wit needs not be ſtill followed with teaching by his Maſter and his fellows: No, he'l learn of himſelf; that is, compare him with other dull Children, and ſo it's true, he needs not be taught, that is, as they. And ſo it is with them that have the diſcerning and enlightning Spirit of God within them; they need not be taught the grounds of Religion, their *A B C*, nor any ſaving Points thereof, with ſuch ado as others need that want that Spirit; they all know *even the leaſt of them*, the *little Children*, 1 Joh.2.13. *They know the Father, and thoſe matters of Religion*, that will not be beaten into the heads of others that have far better natural parts than they, as manifeſt experience ſhews, and Scripture alſo, *Mat.*11. 25.

Q. *But had the Church of the* Jews *and the Servants of God in the Old Teſtament none of theſe things? How is it the ſame Covenant in ſubſtance, if they had not theſe Subſtantials?*

A. In two things; 1. They had them in the ſubſtance: As, 1. Juſtification and pardon of ſin, *Numb.* 23.21. 1 *King.*15. 5. *Pſal.* 32. 1, 2, 5. & 51. 14. *Iſa.* 38.17. 2. Sanctification, *Deut.* 30. 6. the law of Grace was in their hearts, *Pſal.* 37.30, 31.

31. & 143. 10. *Act.* 13.22. And though it be said, *v.* 32. *Which my Covenant they brake*, yet there is no cause of understanding it of all universally, though of many, 1 *Cor.* 10. 5. for the Apostle doth over and over again limit it, and shew that *some* had more grace, 1 *Cor.*10,7.8 9. And it is expresly said when that provocation is spoken, *Howbeit not all that came out of Egypt*, Heb. 3. 16.

Q. *What then is the difference?*

A. 1. In the Old Testament Justification was not so plain; it was obscurely shadowed in Sacrifices, but the chief Sacrifice was not come, *Heb.* 10. 1. 9. And it appears that those Sacrifices they had did not cleanse the Conscience, that is, get off the guilt of sin, cause a clearness in it, 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. and a freedom from all accusations, because the same Sacrifices were repeated every year, not only for the sin of the year going before, but of former years also, *Levit.* 16. 21. So that there was therein *a remembrance made of sin every year*, and the guilt thereof was set before them in the Sacrifice; but now Christ having offered his Sacrifice, the promise here is, *their sin will I remember no more*; it's quite done away by the offering of Christs Body once for all,

all, *Heb.* 9. 14. *Heb.* 10. 10. Not that their ſins were not pardoned in the Old Teſtament, or that *David* was not (and all other faithful men with him) made *white as ſnow*, Pſal. 51. 7. but that was not by vertue of thoſe Sacrifices, (their ſin remained ſtill for any thing they could do) but by vertue of Chriſt's Sacrifice, *Heb.* 10. 5, 6, &c. And withal, they ſaw not their forgiveneſs ſo clearly but that there was need every year to take a new view of it in their Typical Sacrifices, preſenting that Atonement of Jeſus Chriſt, *Levit.* 16. 11. And as Juſtification was not ſo plain; ſo,

2. Sanctification was not ſo plentiful; the Spirit that is *poured* now was but dropt then; they had it as the Apoſtles had it when Chriſt lived, but O how much more had the Apoſtles of it, and others alſo when Chriſt was glorified! *Joh.* 7. 39. *Act.* 4. 8, 31. & 6. 3. This is the firſt part of the Anſwer.

2. Theſe things were given in the Old Teſtament, but they were grounded on the New; for the New Covenant is ratified in the Blood of Chriſt, 1 *Cor.* 11. 25. which was ſhed in the fulneſs of time, from whence were derived all thoſe good things unto the Church of the Old Teſtament;

ment; and therefore the *Jews* are said not to have them (in a sort) because they had them not but with reference to that which was done after Christs coming. See *Heb.* 11. 40. with *Chap.* 10. 14. *They without us*, that is, without that done in the Gospel-times wherein we live; *could not be perfected*, that is, justified and saved. As *John Baptist* is said to baptize with water only, not but that the Spirit accompanied his Baptism; but that was from another, that is, from Christ that came after: So in the Old Testament they had Externals only, not but that they had Spirituals also, but they were fetch'd from the work of Redemption in the New Testament, *Rev.* 13. 8. which the outward things in the Old typified and set forth, and were their best way to help them to that which they of themselves could not help them to, to wit, the Spiritual good things of the New Testament, signified by what was in the Old.

Objections from Scripture-expressions seeming to hold forth two Covenants.

Obj. 1. *It's said expresly*, There was a Covenant made in *Horeb*, Deut. 5. 2. *when they came out of* Egypt, *Exod.* 19. 4, 5. *yet that Covenant is now abolished*, Heb. 8. 9. 13. *therefore it seems it was not the Covenant*

venant of Grace, for we know that is not now aboliſhed?

A. 1. That *Horeb*-Covenant was a Covenant of Grace, as appears by the Preface to the Ten Commandments, *I am the Lord thy God*, (a word of Grace), and by the Promiſe in the ſecond Commandment, of Mercy to thouſands, though Sinners in a ſtrict ſenſe. This is confirmed by the courſe that *Moſes* took after that *Horeb*-Covenant was publiſhed; which was (as we ſee *Deut.* 30. 1, 2, 3.) to exhort them to Repentance, and to offer them Mercy upon Repentance, (which the Covenant of Works doth not admit, but exact perfect Obedience,) and to promiſe them regenerating Grace, *v.*6. which the Covenant of Works doth not effect.

A. 2. *When it is ſaid that the Covenant made with them when they came out of the land of* Egypt *is aboliſhed, the meaning is, not that it is made void* as to the ſubſtance of it, *but as to the managing and way of ordering of it in Old Teſtament-times.*

2 Obj. But we find other-where the very form of the Covenant of Works, *viz. This do and live, Levit.* 18. 5. *Exod.* 19. 5. *Rom.* 10. 5. *Gal.* 3. 12. Why ſhould a Covenant of Grace be ſet forth

in

in the very tenour and terms of a Covenant of Works?

A. 1. Indeed in that [*This do and live*] there is a repetition, resuming and representing of the Covenant of Works for the Lords and his Peoples use; but there is not therein intended an *Obligation* (such as lay in the Covenant of Works) for then none of them in the Old Testament could have lived and been saved, because they could not perform and do perfectly what the Law requireth, *Gal.* 3. 10. The thing therefore pointed at, is the *Administration* of the Covenant of Grace in a legal way suitable to, and carrying a similitude with the Covenant of Works; but it was in order to, and for the service of the Covenant of Grace. It was not so much a Covenant [made] as [made known] and made use of for the better inciting of that People to a recourse to the Covenant of Grace, which alone was the standing and binding Covenant at that time.

A. 2. Yet under (not co-ordinate with, but subordinate to), I say *under* that Covenant of Grace there may be said to be another Covenant and Contract made, that is, a subservient Contract, and that the bond of a Covenant (resembling

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the Covenant of Works) did in ſome ſort lie on that People.

But how were they bound? I anſwer two things:

1. That they were bound *as to their ſenſe*; as we ſee in a Child put by the Father under Tutors and Governours, *Gal.* 4. 1. there's the bond of the Schoolmaſter's Covenant lying heavily upon him, to wit, *If you learn well and do well*, you ſhall have this and that, elſe a *Ferula*, a rod, *&c.* and I ſay, this Covenant lies on the Child, and ſtraitens him, and *to his ſenſe*, (at leaſt ſo much to his ſenſe) there is no other; yet all this while, there is a Covenant of Grace and Love between the Father and the Child that is tyed ſo hard to it, but that's very dark, and in the Childs minority hidden from his ſight (by the Fathers wiſdom) for his better education. So it is here, the *Jews* were put under *Moſes* his Diſcipline, and under the Law as a Schoolmaſter. This Law (with the rod of Ceremonies in its hand) was ever in the ſight of the *Jew*, by means whereof there was a bondage upon his Spirit, *Rom.* 8.15. to wit, the Covenant of Goſpel-Grace being hid from him under the vail of the Law, and the Pædagogy of the Old Teſtament; ſo that he could not look

look to the bottom, the end, *Rom.* 10. 4. and accompliſhment of that Ceremonial frame, which is now aboliſhed, 2 *Cor.* 3. 13. But I add,

2. That they were not bound by that ſubſervient and ſimilitudinary Covenant, *as to their ſtate*; (1) So as that they were to ſtand or fall, live or die, be ſaved or damned according to that Covenant; but when the Law was rougheſt with them, they might take out a prohibition, and appeal to Chriſt unto whom the Ceremonies were to give place at his coming, they being but acceſſories annexed to the Covenant of Grace; and yet becauſe thoſe *Jewiſh* rites and preſcripts were inſtruments of adminiſtring it, therefore (ſaith *Calvin*) the name of *Covenant* is given to them, *Calv. Inſtit. l.* 2. *c.* 11. *ſ.* 4.

3 Obj. *That Covenant cannot be ſaid to be broken that was never made and ſtricken, but there was a Covenant differing from, and ſet on the other ſide of the Goſpel-Covenant that is ſaid to be broken, (and that's the* Sinai-*Covenant made with them when they came out of* Egypt, *Jer.* 31. 34.) *therefore a different Covenant was made and exiſtent in the Old Teſtament, and namely on Mount* Sinai.

A. It's true, there was a Covenant made

made in the Old Testament (in manner and with the terrour of a Covenant of Works) pressing the exact observation of the Law of *Moses*, Deut. 5. 32, 33. and promising a long and happy life in *Canaan* if they kept it, and threatning all curses if they kept it not, *Psal.* 105. 9, 10, 11. *Jer.* 11. 4. 5. and this Covenant they were bound to keep, or else might look to be deprived of the blessings promised, and to undergo the evils threatened; and so they did, and therefore they breaking it (especially in the second Commandment by their Idolatry) *God regarded them not*, Heb. 8. 9. but sent many Judgments on them, and in the end blew them with a Northern wind (as chaffe and unregarded stuff) clean out of *Canaan*: But though there were such an external and temporary Covenant (inwrapt in the spiritual and everlasting Covenant of Grace) for the use of that people, which they brake, and were outwardly broken in pieces for the breach of; yet there was no such Covenant as that they should upon the breach of the *Mosaical* Law, go absolutely to Hell, or expect Life and Salvation by the keeping of it; for could they have had it no other way, they must all have perished. Therefore it was not properly

Vid. *Cyt.* in Deut. pag. 173, 176.

properly a Covenant of Works, wherein they were concluded and shut up from all Grace; but wherein they were concluded and shut up, *Gal.*3.22. that they might seek for that in a way of Grace, which they saw they could not possibly have in a way of Works, And nodoubt many of those that were cast out of the earthly *Canaan* (according to the threats of the legal Covenant) did by the Grace of God through Faith and Repentance inherit the heavenly, and divers of them came again to the earthly also; yea divers times, God remitted the temporal punishments also upon their repentance, *Deut.*4.30,31. & 30.1. 2 *Chron.*15.4. & 12.7,8. 1 *Sam.* 12.19,20. which is manifestly the indulgence of the Covenant of Grace, *Neh.* 9.31. To draw up all: The conclusion of the former argument is granted, to wit, That there was another Covenant, that is, another managing and ministring of the Covenant of Grace under the Old-Testament than in the New, which goeth under the name of *another Covenant*; but this maketh nothing at all against the standing Covenant of Grace, of Righteousnes, Life and Salvation by Jesus Christ, which was, is, and shall be in all Ages of the Church; for that legal Co-

venant ſtandeth under it, and inſtead of fighting againſt it (unleſs it be by mans abuſe of it) doth Service to it, the ceremonial things being types of Chriſt, the promiſed *Canaan* of Heaven; And the moral law, unto the firſt Table whereof the ceremonies are annexed, as their political Laws (going under the name of the *Horeb*-Covenant *Jer.*34.13,14.) were to the ſecond Table; I ſay, the moral Law (ſo ſtrictly preſs'd upon them) was to urge them to betake themſelves to Chriſt and the Covenant of Grace; yea ſo alſo do the ten Commandments now by a moral convincement, though not by a ceremonial affrightment. The old Covenant did indeed differ from the Goſpel-Covenant, that is, from the adminiſtration of the Covenant of Grace in Goſpel-times; but it was no way oppoſite to the Covenant of Grace in the ſubſtance of it, but auxiliary to it.

4. Obj. *We find* Gal. 4.24. *two Covenants expreſt.*

A. That Doctrine is delivered to thoſe *that would be under the law*, as appears *v.* 21. that is, who did ſeek Juſtification by the Works of the Law; unto whom there are always two Covenants to be preſented.

1. The

1. The Covenant of Works in its proper nature and ſtrict obligation to Death and Damnation, if there be not perfect Obedience, I ſay, to ſuch the Law and Covenant of Works are to be preſented, in their full and naked force (as *Samuel* preſented a King 1 *Sam.* 8. 10, 11.) to let them know when they are ſo willing to be under the Law, what, and how ſervile and woful a ſtate it is that they put themſelves under.

2. The Covenant of Grace alſo is to be ſet forth, to let them know that they are deprived of it through their own default, and by their adhering to the Covenant of Works, and muſt be caſt out as *Adam* out of Paradiſe, and *Hagar* and her Son out of *Abraham's* family. Yea ſo it is ſtill, they that will be ſaved by their Works, or partly by Chriſt and partly by their Works, are excluded the Covenant of Grace, and ſhall have no benefit by Jeſus Chriſt, *Gal.* 5. 2. but are remitted to the Covenant of Works and to *Moſes* court (as *Moſes* ſtands in oppoſition to Chriſt) to be tried there. Act. 25. 12. Ibis ad moſen. with Act. 26. 32.

No doubt therefore there are two Covenants, that is, a Covenant of Works before the fall & a Covenant of Grace ſince;

but there are not (after the fall) two binding Covenants, ſave in the ſence before mentioned: for the Covenant of Works and the Law, ſhall hold, none in Fetters that comes to Chriſt; but if they will not come to him, that Law will ſurely hold and hamper them, bind them hand and foot, and caſt them into utter darkneſs. Howbeit in this caſe, the Obligation of the Covenant of Works is *accieдntal*, becauſe men (through their ignorance and pride) refuſe the Covenant of Grace that would relieve them, *Rom.*10. 1,2,3.

5. Obj: In *Heb.*8.7,8,9. &c. there's a plain diſtinction of Covenants firſt and ſecond, and the Covenant which God made with them when he led them out of the Land of *Egypt*, is ſaid to be eſtabliſhed on leſs excellent promiſes, yea to be faulty, and that which was to decay, wax old, and vaniſh away: can theſe things be ſaid of the Covenant of Grace? if not then there was another.

A. The firſt and ſecond adminiſtration of one and the ſame Covenant, are called by the name of the firſt and ſecond Covenant; as the name of *Covenant* is given to Circumciſion, *Gen.*17.9,10. and the name of the *New-Teſtament* is given to the

the Cup in the Lords-ſupper, 1 *Cor.* 11. 25. to wit, becauſe the Old and New-Teſtament was, and is, clothed, carried, adminiſtred and confirmed with and by theſe Ordinances: Now theſe Acceſſories to the Covenant in the Old and New-Teſtament are ſo different, that there is the aſpect of two Covenants, when it is but the ſame Covenant in ſeveral forms and ordered in ſeveral ways according to the ſtate of the Church of God of old and in theſe laſt times. The Jews began their day in the evening, the firſt part whereof therefore was dark, the later light, yet it was but one natural day; and ſo but one Covenant of Grace in the darker adminiſtration of the Old-Teſtament, and the brighter of the new. Now for the particulars mentioned in the Objection, the Apoſtle ſaith indeed;

1. That the ſecond Covenant is *better*, as the Sun is better to us in Summer than in Winter; for then it is vailed and clouded, but in Summer bright: So the firſt adminiſtration was clouded with many ceremonies, ours is bright and glorious; yet the ſame Covenant ſtill, as the ſame Sun: And (*better promiſes*) doth not imply promiſes better for the matter, *Heb.* 11. 13. and ſubſtance, for there cannot be a

better promiſe than the firſt promiſe, *Gen.* 3.15. which runs through all the Old-Teſtament; but better for the clearneſs, fulneſs, ſweetneſs, and efficacy of them under the ſecond adminiſtration.

2 Whereas the firſt Covenant is ſaid to be *Faulty*: (*Faulty*) doth not ſignifie that which is leſs right but leſs perfect; not that which is leſs and inferiour as to approbation, (both being ordained of God) but as to operation, not leſs juſtifiable but leſs clear and comfortable, notwithſtanding all this the good and glorious Covenant of Grace lay at the bottom.

3. As for *decaying and vaniſhing away*, that ſhews not a different Covenant; for all the vaniſhing is in the adminiſtration, the ſubſtance is ſtill left: To conclude this prolix diſcourſe, 1. The Covenant of Works (made with *Adam* in his Integrity) was ſwallowed up in that Covenant of Grace, *Gen.*3.15. by which it ſo ceaſed that no man can now be ſaved by it, becauſe of his inability to keep it: Nor ſhall be condemned by it, if by Faith he lay hold upon Chriſt that hath kept it; only it is reſumed in the Old-Teſtament, not as contracted for the ſubſtance of it,

it, but as presented for the service of it to the Covenant of Grace.

2. There are two Cases wherein the Scripture makes the greatest difference between the Old Testament-Covenant and the New.

1. When they be compared together, to shew what is proper to either, as 2 *Cor.* 3. 6, 7, *&c.*

2. When the Old Covenant is adhered to for Justification of life, as *Gal.* 3. 21.

But the former difference is only administratory, and the latter accidental.

Jer. 36. 5, 6.

Jeremy *commanded* Baruch, *saying, I am shut up, I cannot go into the house of the Lord; Therefore go thou and read in the roll which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the Lord in the ears of the people in the Lords house on the fasting-day. It may be they will present their supplication before the Lord, and return every man from his evil way*, &c.

Q. *What are the Duties belonging to a fasting-day, especially a publick Fast?*

A. 1. The Word of God is to be read, *Neh.* 9. 3. but (more especially) those

parts of the Word are to be read; those Sermons to be preached and repeated, that are most suitable to the state of the people at that time, as the Sermons of *Jeremy* were to the present state of the *Jews*. The necessity whereof appears, because when *Jeremy* could not preach publickly himself, he caused *Baruch* to write out and read before the People the Sermons he had preached before, even from the days of *Josiah*. And (indeed) the Word of God is the principal means of effecting that which is intended in a Fast, to wit, Humiliation and Reformation, 2 *King*. 22. 11. *Act*. 2. 37.

2. Every man should then set himself to seek the Lord, 2 *Chron*. 20. 3. Fast-days are Prayer-days, so here *v*. 37. the Fasting being considerable only, as it is an assistance and evidence of Humiliation, and an appendix and improver of the duty of Prayer. These Prayers (to make them acceptable and effectual) must have in them a double Grace:

1. Humility; for (as it is here in the Original and in the Margent) *Supplications must fall*, that is, fall low before the Lord, in the humble confession of Sin, *Neh*. 9. 2. *Luk*. 18. 13. this is plain in *Daniels* prayer, *Dan*. 9. 20.

2. Faith

2. Faith, *Jam.* 1. 6. 2 *Chron.* 20. 10. For Prayers in Scripture are said not only to fall, but to ascend, *Psal.* 141.3. *Act.* 10. 4. and by falling lower from an humbled Soul, they ascend higher, and rebound as it were, the more heaven-ward, 2 *Chron.* 30.27. This Faith is necessary; for though humility and repentance fit us for mercy, yet it is Faith that helps us to it; our comfort is not bottomed on our Repentance, or Faith either (as it is a Grace in us) but on the Mercy of God, which by the hand of Faith we lay hold upon, *Isa.* 1. 16, 17, 18. Repentance is the forerunner and a necessary duty, but our washing needs washing, and our repentance pardon, and pardon ariseth from mercy, and mercy is had and enjoyed by our *coming* to God, and making out unto him for it by Faith, *Joh.* 6. 35.

3. Prayer, and any profession of Repentance we make therein will not serve the turn, without amendment of life: *every one must return from his evil way.* What had the Prodigals deliberation and resolution of returning to his Father been, if he had not actually returned to his Fathers house, yea to the Laws of his Fathers house; for we must suppose (which will well agree with such a Parable) he came

came not thither only to receive a Robe, and a Ring, and ſhoos for his feet to walk with like a Gentleman (nay, the uſage of an hired ſervant would have ſerv'd his turn) but reverently and obediently to receive Commands alſo to walk by. Indeed in the day of humiliation there is a ſincere Reſolution only, and a ſerious engagement (as *Ezra* 10.12.) but afterward there is (or ſhould be) a zealous Execution and real accompliſhment, as *Ezra* 10. 14, 15, 16.

4. Faſting and Fear do well together, for it is the Fear of God (when his anger appears in his threatnings) which much avails and prevails for the doing of that which God requires of us, as namely for prayer, 2 *Chron.* 20. 3. and forſaking our evil way, *Prov.* 16. 6. But now there is a threefold Fear:

1. A Fear ariſing from the conviction of Gods power and juſtice, and our own guilt, and accompanied with conſternation; this is the Fear of ordinary men living in the Church, and ſomewhat acquainted with Gods terrors, and that are not yet faln into an utter obſtinacy, and this ſeems to be ſpoken of here, *v.* 16. the Princes feared (looking to God and his greatneſs) yet reſolved to tell the King,

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Looking to his greatneſs alſo, and provident (it ſeems) to keep a correſpondence with him; yet the godly among them had a gracious fear; others were affrighted with puniſhment, but the ungodly came not thus far, *v.*24.

2. A Fear ariſing out of conviction that men have to do with God, and accompanied with indignation becauſe they cannot abide that God ſhould croſs, controul, menace and ſtraiten them. Somewhat of this ſeems to be in this King *Jehoiakim*, who could not but know he had to do with God as well as with *Jeremiah*, (conſidering how much of God appeared in and with *Jeremy*) but his inward horrour and hatred made him do as the *Philiſtins* did, that feared and fought againſt God, 1 *Sam.* 4.7,8. ſo did *Jehoiachim* with his Pen-knife and fire, and fury againſt *Jeremy* and *Baruch*. This Fear is in the worſt men.

3. There is a Fear in the beſt men, ariſing from conviction of Gods terrible Majeſty, *Pſal.* 76. 7. accompanied with an apprehenſion of his goodneſs, *Hoſ.* 3. 5. and working their hearts to an holy ſubmiſſion and obedience. Something of this or like this we find in the *Ninevites* in a natural and moral way, *Joh.* 3. 10. and

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in the Church we find it in a better way, *Ezra* 10. 9, 10, 11, 12. This is an encouraging Fear, *Ninive* says. *Who can tell? Jon.* 3. 9. the Church, *Who knoweth? Joel* 2. 14. And sure, if Gods, *It may be*, *v.* 7. come to something, then will our (*May-bees*) also. If we give him his expectation, he will give us ours, *Jon.*3.10.

Jer. 38: 2. with Jer. 21. 9.

Thus saith the Lord, He that goeth forth (or falleth) to the Chaldeans, *he shall live.*

Q. *How could the People deliver themselves, and so the King and City, into the hands of their and his greatest enemy, and yet keep the fidelity they owed to their King?*

Jer. 21.9. *A.* 1. It was Gods will and counsel, and command, *Jer.* 27. 12. *Jer.* 38. 20. that they (and their King also) should yield themselves up to the King of *Babylon*; and the bond of our Obedience to God, in an extraordinary case, takes away any other ordinary bond of Obedience, crossing that; as the command to *Abraham* to kill his Son, took away the standing bond both of the fifth and sixth Commandment at that time, and as to him.

Calv. in loc. 2. It's answered that (out of such an extraordinary case) as long as there is any ordinary

ordinary way to ſave King, City, Country, Subjects are bound to adventure their lives to the utmoſt for their defence and preſervation.

But as things ſtood here, two things were to be conſidered, *viz.*

1. That there was no hope of keeping the City in a way of reaſon, the enemy being ſo much too ſtrong for them, all help failing them, and they being utterly diſabled to ſuſtain the Siege, there being no more bread in the City, *v.* 9. It's uſual to deliver up ſtrong Forts that cannot be kept but with greater loſs to the ſupream Governour upon the beſt conditions they can get.

2. The Caſe here makes all clear, for whereas when *Jeruſalem* was beſieged by *Senacherib*, 2 *King.* 19. 32, 33, 34. the Lord ſaid he would take away, and did take away that proud enemy by one of the Heavenly Hoſt, ſo that he returned by the way he came, and did not, could not, come into the City: Here the caſe was clean contrary, for God made known by his own Word, that it was abſolutely certain and reſolved on in Heaven, that the Army of the *Chaldeans* ſhould take the City, and burn it with fire if they ſtood out with him. Albeit therefore it

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were not yet actually done, yet it was all one as if it had been done becauſe it was certainly and ſuddenly to be done.

Now although Subjects are to ſtand for their King and Country to the utmoſt drop of their blood as long as there is any hope; yet if there be none, but Gods pleaſure is revealed for their being under another King by giving him the poſſeſſion of all, they may and ſhould yield to Gods will in it, to whom it belongeth to diſpoſe of the Kingdoms of the World as he pleaſeth, *Jer.* 27. 6, 7, 11, 12. And in ſuch a caſe all Oaths and Obligations to the former King ceaſe, and the preſent powers that have got all into their hands, are to be ſubmitted to as long as it pleaſeth God ſo to order it, though it be for the ſpace of ſeventy years; for why ſhould we be the Authors of our death and miſery by our obſtinacy? *Jer.* 27. 12, 13.

Q. *If falling to the* Chaldeans *were according to the will of God, why doth* Jeremiah *himſelf ſo paſſionately diſclaim that charge?* Jer. 38. 13, 14.

A. It's one thing *to go forth* by way of dedition and a voluntary yielding to an enemy that cannot be reſiſted; another thing to abide in the City, and act there for the enemy in a way of ſedition and trea-

treachery. This last is that which *Jeremy* disclaims, he acted not for the *Chaldeans* in what he said but for his own People, who had no better way to save themselves than to lay aside their weapons and animosity, and tender their submission (more to God than) to *Nebuchadnezzar.*

Q. *But what shall be said to the Fugitives that fell to the* Chaldeans, *Jer.* 38. 19. *&* 39. 9. *are they to be commended?*

A. It's one thing to fly out of Fear as those Run-aways did, another to yield out of Faith and Obedience to God, which was the thing *Jeremy* perswaded, and intended it should be done by the generality, not an inconsiderable company; yet they that fell to the *Chaldeans* by flight, fared the better for it with the enemy it's like (though they were captivated also, *Jer.* 39. 9.) but had they fain to him by Faith, they should have found favour with the enemy, and with God also, as *Jer.* 39. 18.

Jer. 38. 27.

Then came all the Princes to Jeremiah, *and asked him, and he told them according to all these words that the King commanded, So they left speaking with him, for the matter was not perceived.*

Qu.

Qu. *Did* Jeremy *do well in following the Kings command, and giving a sliding answer to the Princes, or is he to be blamed for it?*

A. 1. This may be taken into consideration, and serve somewhat for the better weighing of this Question, that albeit *Jeremy* in his Discourse with the King and advice to him, speak according to the Word of God, *v.*21. and no doubt by the Spirit of God; yet we do not find that he had any special Command from God to go and deliver these words unto him, though he had formerly shewed and said from God the same things for substance, *v.*21. *Jer.*27.12. It's one thing for a Prophet to deliver Gods mind (when a question is propounded to him) in way of *Counsel*, *v.* 15. another to deliver it by special Command and as a Messenger sent from God to say such words. This may be cleared by *Pauls* manner of speaking when the *Corinthians* wrote to him to be resolved; sometimes he saith, *Not I, but the Lord*, 1 Cor. 7.10. sometimes, *I, not the Lord*, v.12. & 25. *I have no commandment of the Lord.* Yet he spake what was very agreeable to the Word of God, and as one that *had the Spirit of God*, v. 40. but he had not such an express Command for one thing

Vid Calv. in loc.

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whereof he ſpeaks as for another: Now, if it were thus here (which I leave to the Learned and judicious to judg of, then *Jeremy* might be leſs reſolute becauſe leſs armed with a ſpecial Commiſſion from God: and therefore as he got from the King, Security for his life before he gave him counſel, *v.* 15. ſo here he takes the counſel the King gave him as the likelieſt way to ſecure it with the Princes; when in that which God gave him a direct charge to ſpeak, he did not uſe to caſt any ſuch perils, but ſhewed himſelf moſt couragious in the confidence of Gods *ſending him to ſpeak all that he ſpake in their ears*, Jer.26. 15.

2. For the thing it ſelf, he ſpake that which was true; for we find before (*Chap.*37.20.) that he did preſent his Supplication to the King, that he might not return to *Jonathans* houſe, and perhaps he renewed the ſame Petition at this meeting (though it be not expreſs'd) to wit, that whatſoever oppoſition of him ſhould ariſe, yet he might not be put by his Adverſaries into that diſmal Priſon. It may be ſomewhat probable (I ſay) that *Jeremy* now renewed this Petition becauſe the King here menti-

oneth it; And if he did, why might not *Jeremy*, speaking part of the Truth, conceal the rest, which it was not profitable to the Princes to know (rather it might have put them on a great sin, that is, the killing of *Jeremy*) and dangerous to himself to make known?

3. (To speak a little more fully and distinctly) The Princes might ask *Jeremy*, either,

1. More loosely, *viz.* what he said to the King when he was within, and then, the answer the King put into his mouth, might serve the turn, and excuse *Jeremy*, it being truly spoken; or

2. The Princes might examin him strictly, of all that passed between the King and him, according as the King describes it in *v.* 25. of this Chapter: If they did so, *Jeremy* cannot be excused but will appear weak as another man; For

1. He went not to the King to present any Petition, but the King sent to him to hear what he would say to him; *v.* 14.

2. If *Jeremy* did not present that Petition now, but it must rest upon this that he did it in another meeting, at another time and at another place (for so

was

was that that is recorded, *Chap.37.20.* it was at another time, when *Jeremy* was in the Dungeon, *Jer.37.16.* This, when in the Court of the Prison, *Jer.38.13.* And in another place; That in the Kings house, *Jer.37.17.* This in Gods house, *Jer.38.14.*) I say, If *Jeremy* did not present that Petition at this meeting, the business in that regard, is much more questionable on *Jeremie's* part: But

3. Though he did present it now, and so spake a clear truth (as to that point) yet he spake not all, nor the greatest part, but rather concealed all, that is, that whole substance of the business, which they by their questioning with him, desired to have discovered; I suppose therefore that they did not strictly enquire of him, nor stay long upon the enquiry; for then, either he must have been silent, and that Princes cannot bear (they look to have their questions answered) *Joh.19.9,10.* or he must have spoken some untruth, feigned something that was not, and that a *Jeremy* could not bear; or else expose himself to their cruelty and rage, of which notwithstanding the Text saith nothing, but rather declares that the

buſineſs with the Prophet was calmly concluded and left off, *v.* 27. yea, *the matter was not perceived*, and therefore it's certain they did not get from *Jeremy* what paſs'd between the King and him. Indeed it's a wonder that the Princes (that did ſo eye and pry into *Jeremy* and his motions, *v.* 25.) ſhould handle ſuch a matter as this, ſo ſlightly; but herein the wonderful Power and Providence of God appears, that ſubtil and fierce men are not always like themſelves; God caſts a miſt before their eyes, that they cannot find the door, *Gen.* 19. 11. and ſee their advantages: He ſtupifies their minds (*Herod* ſends not a Meſſenger with the wiſe-men to bring him word where Jeſus was, but truſts to them and is baffled, *Mat.* 2. 16.) Or he calms their hearts, *Gen.* 33. 4, 10. or tyes their tongues, *Gen.* 31. 29. and makes them ſlubber over a buſineſs for his Childrens ſafety.

Theſe words (*the matter was not perceived*) ſhew (I think) that God cauſed that to be concealed by which his holy Servant might have ſuffered.

Jer. 50. 4.

In thoſe days, and at that time, ſaith the Lord, the Children of Iſrael *ſhall come they*

they and the Children of Judah *together, &c.*

Q. *How may it be brought to paſs that there ſhould be ſuch an Union as is here ſet before us in the conjunction of* Iſrael *and* Judah *?*

A. 1. One rod, and a common calamity, laid upon differing Parties, may be a good preparation to make them far aſunder come together, as ſtraggling ſheep run together when they be hunted, and when Beacons be ſet a fire, the whole Nation gathers into a Body to ſave it ſelf: the long Captivity wherein the *Jews* were ſcattered, made them (no doubt) to long after a cloſing greater than before, aſſoon as they might.

2. *One Rule* is the principal means of effecting and eſtabliſhing it. There are two Rules, *viz.* of Reaſon and of Scripture, wherein men concur as lines in the Center, *Act.* 5. 40. *&* 15. 2. *&* 15. 31. But the Rule of Scripture prevaileth moſt, becauſe mans Reaſon is variable and fallible, and corrupt; but God is one, his Name one, *Zach.* 14. 19. and his Word both pure and ſure, *Prov.*30.5. *Pſal.*19.7. Hence in that great Controverſie about Circumciſion, *Act.* 15. 2. when the caſe

was determined by Scripture, *v.* 15. there enſued a great and general ſatisfaction, *v.* 31. *& Act.* 16.4,5. An Infallible Authority commands Unity.

3. *One Head*, *Hoſ.* 1. 11. They that according to the Rule, get under the right Head, will agree among themſelves; *Quæ conveniunt in aliquo tertio, (in illo tertio) conveniunt inter ſe.* Many profeſs Chriſt, and talk of him, but few are *in him*, elſe there would be more agreement, *Eph.* 4. 15. & 2. 15, 16. for that Head keeps the Members in order, and hath a ſtaffe of *bands* to rule them with, *Zach.* 11.7. Not but that they in Chriſt may through weakneſs, have fallings out one with another; but when they have well bethought themſelves they bring their diſſents to the arbitrement of their Head as he hath revealed himſelf in his Word. By this means diſſents are abated, diſcord (though there be diſſents in judgment) prevented, and little things cannot keep them aſunder, becauſe there are greater things to hold them together. When perſecuting *Saul* was in *Chriſt* once, *Rom.* 16. 7. how did he agree with Chriſtians, and contend for agreement with his fellow-members? 1 *Cor.* 1. 10. All that appoint themſelves *one Head*, gather together under it, *Hoſ.* 1. 11.

1. 11. Sure they that be of one Spirit with the Head, 1 *Cor.* 6. 17. *Eph.* 4. 4. cannot be (if they be and act, like themselves) of ill and sowre spirits one to another long, however by occasion and temptation they may be displeased till matters be debated, and the Spirit be stirred up to do its work; for flesh will be always froward, *Gal.* 5. 20. but the Spirit of God always meek, and for meekness.

4. One sanctified heart, *Ezek.* 11. 19. where the substance is right, where there is Grace in the heart sincerely stir'd up and set a-work, there the heart will reach right things, *Jer.* 31. 33, 34. and incline the affections to Love and Union (because of the substance) though there be in divers more obscure things, and things of less moment, different perswasions. Unregeneracy foments faction, *Gal.* 4. 29. but Grace and Peace go together.

5. One and the same publick meeting-place for respective Societies, that they may be together present at, and partake in Gods Ordinances. *Jerusalem* was a City *compact* together (not only in regard of their houses, but their hearts) inasmuch as that was the place of common meeting before the Lord, *Psal.* 122. 3, 4. but when some went to *Jerusalem* to worship, and

others to *Dan* and *Bethel*; and when the *Jews* worshipped at *Jerusalem*, and the *Samaritans* at Mount *Gerizim*, no marvel if there were many a bloody battel, between the one and the other: see 2 *Chron.* 13. 19. to *v.* 13. *Joh.* 4. 9.

6. A reverent respect to able and godly Ministers, one and another (*Paul* as well as *Apollo*, *Apollo* as well as *Peter*) and a diligent attending on their Ministry, and making recourse to them for resolution, *Act.* 15. 2. 1 *Cor.* 7. 1. for Unity is the work of the Ministry, 1 *King.* 18. 39. *Luk.* 1. 17. *Eph.* 4. 13, 14.

7. Earnest prayer to God for oneness of heart among the People of God, whereof our Saviour himself is an eminent Pattern, *Joh.* 17. 21, 22, 23.

In which Endeavours and Prayers for Unity we may be encouraged.

1. By old Prophesies and Promises, *Isa.* 2. 4. & 11. 13.

2. And Performances also, and a remarkable effecting of Union both in the Old and New Testament, 2 *Sam.* 5. 2. 1 *King.* 18. 39. *Act.* 4. 32.

3. By the Power of God, in whose *hands* the broken sticks are made one, *Ezek.* 37. 19, 22. Yea, he can moot up enmities, and remove the root of them by chan-

changing the heart, *Isa.* 11. 6. 1 *Sam.* 25. 32.

4. By consideration of the Glory of God, which as it is in much danger to be obscured, and his Name to be blasphemed by the strife of Brethren, in the sight of the *Canaanite*, *Perizzite*, and prophane men, *Gen.* 15.7. so will it be promoted by their Unity, *Act.* 11. 18. This is Christs reason when he prayed for Unity, *That the world may believe that thou hast sent me*, *Joh.* 17. 21. for how shall the World (that knows not God) believe that Christ is sent from the God of peace, when his followers and those that profess him, are a company of froward men, and of a dogged spirit one towards another?

These things may move us to seek peace with respect unto God. Now, in regard of our selves, we may add strength to our prayers and hopes of peace, by getting,

1. Ability; by studying God and Scripture, for Ignorance is the mother of Errour, *Mat.* 22. 29. and Errour the mother of Contention, and the make-bate in Church-society, *Act.* 15. 2, 24.

2. Humility; for Pride raiseth the storm, *Prov.* 13. 10. and Humility causeth a calm, *Gen.* 13. 8, 9. *Judg.* 8. 1, 2, 3.

3. Holiness; harden not others in their errone-

erroneous opinions, and peace-breaking practices by an irregular life. They that will differ, defend their conceits by ſtanding on their Godlineſs, and ſtanding to it that they on the other part are not ſo godly: when yet it is not Godlineſs in many, for then they would not ſo wofully as they do neglect the duties of the firſt Table; but it is a kind of common honeſty, wherein notwithſtanding if others be wanting, they conclude that they are not in the right in their judgments and way, and therefore they will never agree with them. All this is but weak arguing, but it is a ſtrong argument to move thoſe that are in the right to ſtudy Righteouſneſs, and make themſelves amiable by being conſcionable, and appear to be righter in their thoughts by being better in their lives, that ſo others may be taken with the beauty of true Holineſs, and join themſelves to them.

4. Chriſtian conference with thoſe that differ; for diſſents are abated by debating, *Prov.* 25. 8, 9, 10. that which keeps People from agreeing is that they will not meet and treat. And it is obſerved that when men differing (I mean humble and ſober men) diſcourſe one with another, their

their diſſents are brought into a narrow room: But ſuch meetings are to be managed with care and prayer, that they that are unſound in the Faith, may not make (by their parts and ſubtilties) thoſe unſound that are in the right, not weaken them in the truth; and (on the other ſide) that they may not hearten others in their Errours with whom they confer, by ill handling a good cauſe.

5. A ſerious conſideration how far they are gone whom dividing Principles have unglewed and rent from the reſt of Gods people, *viz.* to deny the Trinity, the Deity of Jeſus Chriſt, the Godhead of the Holy Ghoſt; to profeſs themſelves above Ordinances, and to forſake Family-piety, and thoſe Religious Exerciſes that Scripture-Saints could not live without. Be afraid of the firſt and loweſt ſtep by the horrour of the higheſt.

6. A great care in Chriſtians to walk by the ſame Rule in thoſe things whereunto they have already attained; *Phil.* 3. 16. If nature be carefully preſerved and cheriſhed, there's the more hope thereby of expelling turbulent humours, and that the body will be quiet. When Biſhop *Ridley* and *Hooper* differed about Ceremonies, both of them being under ſuffering they grew

grew to a good agreement; whereof *Ridley* in his Letter to him, gives this reason, *viz.* that (having look'd over his Writings) he saw (that howsoever in some things each of them abounded in his own sense, yet) they were of one and the same mind for the substantial parts of Religion; and so he did with all love, close with him, so will they one with another who consider how much God bears with in all those in whom there is the substance of Religion, (though many failings) and never separateth himself from them.

Jer. 50. 4.

In those days, and at that time, &c.

Q. *What are those days, and what is that time whereof* Jeremy *here speaks?*

A. This his Prophesie may have reference to three periods of time.

First, To the time of the *Jews* return out of Captivity: For which purpose we may consider,

1. That in the first rent of the Kingdom, the Priests and Levites that were in all *Israel* (being cast off by *Jeroboam*) came into *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, 2 *Chron.* 11. 13, 14. And after them out of all the Tribes of *Israel*, such as set their hearts to seek

seek the Lord came also to *Jerusalem*, *v.* 16. which it seems were no small number, because of the strength that the Kingdom of *Rehoboam* received by them, *v.* 17.

2. We find that in *Asa* his time they *fell to him out of* Israel *in abundance*; as also, that *Hezekiah* afterward sent his Letters *throughout all* Israel, 2 *Chron.* 30. 1, 5, 6. and divers of *Israel* came in, and made up a great Congregation, *v.* 11, 13, 18.

3. Albeit many might come to the Passover and return to their own Country and habitations again; yet it is very probable that when *Tiglath pileser* had carried away so many of the Ten Tribes captives, 2 *King.* 15. 29. I say, between that time and the taking of them away generally by *Salmanasar*, divers of them fled for refuge to *Judah*, and setled themselves there; and that seems to be meant by strangers, 2 *Chron.* 30. 25. that is, such of the Ten Tribes, who (besides the Congregation that came out of *Israel* by the present call to the Passover) did by reason of Religion settle themselves in *Judah*, which they might do also in latter times for their safety, being liker to fare better in *Judah*, than with the *Assyrian*. All this makes it out that there was a mixture of *Judah* and *Israel* before the Captivity.

Diodat. Jun. Trem. in 1 Chro. 9. 1, 2.

Now

Now, to apply this to the preſent purpoſe, the firſt remarkable time of their coming more cloſely together, was, at their return out of the Captivity wherein they had been ſcattered. The *Iſraelit's* that mixed themſelves with *Judah* came (it's very like) out of the Captivity when they did, partaking therein of the privileg of the better party to whom they had joined themſelves; which appeareth alſo in the genealogy of thoſe that returned out of *Babylon*, among whom not only *Judah* and *Benjamin*, but divers of other Tribes of *Iſrael*, are expreſly reckoned, 1 *Chron.*9. 3. *Ezra* 2.2. & *v.*70. albeit they dwelt for preſent, not in the cities of *Samaria*, but of *Judah*.

Secondly, (to come to the ſecond period) Although the ten Tribes (if we ſpeak of the generality and the Body of them) returned not out of Captivity (as *Judah* did) to their own country; yet under Chriſt, (to whom this Coming, and Covenanting is to be extended, as *Jer.*50. 20.) they came together, when the Goſpel was preached, as under one Head, *Hoſ.*1.11. Hence we read, *Act.*2.5. of Jews, *out of every Nation under Heaven*, they being ſcattered by the

the *Aſſyrian Babylonian*, and other ſucceeding Kings into far diſtant places. There alſo we find the Apoſtle ſpeaking to the *whole Houſe of* Iſrael, *v.*36. and that at the ſame time, three thouſand were converted, that is, united together in Chriſt, *v.*41. That of St. *James* is clearer, who writes expreſly *to the twelve Tribes ſcattered abroad*, that is, ſcattered by the *Aſſyrians* and *Babylonians* or *Antiochus*: So as that they returned not with others to their own Land; yet, to the Faith of Chriſt they were converted, and therefore *James* writes to them as to thoſe who had received the Faith, though they did not, as they ought, ſhew it in the fruits. St. *Peter* alſo points to the ſame Perſons when he writes *to the Strangers*, 1 Pet.1.1. that is, to thoſe of *Judah* and *Iſrael*, diſperſed here and there where they lived as Strangers, but yet he writes to them as Perſons come into Jeſus Chriſt, and conjoined on that corner-ſtone, 1 *Pet.* 2.4,5,6.

Thirdly, there is another period of time that we expect, and that is, when the *Jews* ſhall be called and come together in a conſiderable Body, *Rom.* 11. 25,26. unto and under Chriſt the Head of the whole Church; unto which time divers

divers Learned men refer those prophecies *Ezek.* 37.10,12. *Hos.* 1.11. *Amos.* 9.14.15. And, howsoever this Prophecy may be said to be fulfilled truly already, yet ther's cause to say that it shall be most remarkably compleated then.

Jer. 50.4.

Weeping they shall go, and seek the Lord their God?

Qu. *Wherefore should they go out of Captivity, and when they went to meet with God, weeping, when partings cause weepings and meetings joy,* Joh. 16.6,22. *with* Matth. 28.8. Psal. 126.6 *?*

A. Men (and so the Church) may weep, albeit there be cause of rejoycing before them, for divers reasons, namely, out of joy, or, because of Afflictions accompanying their comforts, or for their sins.

First, men may weep for joy] and because of the Workings of Natural Affections upon strange and un-expected comfortable changes and alterations; so it was with *Joseph's* brethren; the revealing of himself to them (after a sad condition before) was accompanied with weeping, *Gen.* 45.13,14. & 46.29.

Thus,

Thus, when *Archedamus* ſent word of a great victory with much Loſs to the enemy, but of none on their part, the *Spartans* hearing of it, fell all a weeping; *Uſq adeo Lacrumæ, tum lætitiæ tum dolori ſunt communes, Xenoph. Lib 7. Sect. 620.*

Secondly, becauſe of manifold afflictions accompanying their comforts: As here in their return.

1. Becauſe they had been ſo long abſent from God, as Friends, met at laſt, weep becauſe they have wanted one another ſo long: When they ken'd a returning God, it might well grieve them that they had wanted his ſight Seventy years.

2. Becauſe divers of their brethren were ſcattered here and there, and abode ſtill in *Babylon*, as not able or not willing to return, *Heb.* 2. 6. Now every creature mourns when it wants its company.

3. Becauſe their Countrey was ſpoiled and waſted. A great Comfort it was to ſee *Jeruſalem*, builded as a *City compact*, *Pſalm.* 122. 3. but to ſee it burnt and broken and conſum'd, that was a weeping buſineſs, *Neh.* 1. 4.

4. Becauſe they were to meet with ſo many Enemies and Oppoſitions in their own Countrey; for though God made Heathen Kings to be for them, yet they

had to do with malevolent men round about them, *Neh.* 2. 10. that would do them all hurt with all their heart, but no good, nor suffer to have any, but against their will. This they might foresee when they went to *Zion* and grieve at it.

5. And especially, because the Temple was burnt, and the Lord had never an House to dwell in with them; we may see the sadness of this in the mournful posture of those fourscore men, *Jer.* 41. 5, 6. that are said indeed, to come with Offerings to the House of the Lord; yet it is not probable that the news of the burning of that House had not sounded so far as *Sechem* and *Shilo*: They came therefore to present their piety, not so much in the House as in the place where the Lord had had an House, which because it stood not now as before, therefore they were so sad; for what's *Canaan* without *Jerusalem? Jerusalem* without *Zion? Zion* without God? and where was God then (most eminently) but in his Holy Temple?

6. Because, though after their return, there was a new Temple erected, yet that fell so short of the former that they came therefore weeping, *Ezek.* 3. 12. *Hagg.* 2. 33. To which we may add.

7. Because

7. Becauſe they were never like to ſee things in their Countrey reſtored to any ſuch Beauty as they had ſeen it in formerly; to wit, looking on things with an eye of Senſe, and moſt had not the eye of Faith to look to Chriſt, *Hag.* 2. 7. yea, all generally had a dim eye in thoſe days as to things Spiritual.

Thirdly, There was cauſe enough to mourn for their Sin. In regard whereof,

1. There was a mourning making way for their coming out of Captivity, for the Lord hears *Ephraim* bemoaning, and then reſolves on their return, *Jer.* 31. 18, 19, 20,

2. When they came to their Countrey they had cauſe to weep for that ſo long continued, and ſo like to be continued Deſolation that was there becauſe of their Sin. It was mentioned before as a great part of their afflictions; but here it is repeated as reflecting on, and the fruit of, their Sin; which they ſaw they had great cauſe to lament when they had viewed it in that Looking-glaſs, that is, in the Nations ruine: as *Joſeph*'s Brethren mourned for the ill and moſt ſinful uſage of their Brother, when they were ſo harſhly uſed themſelves. See *Dan.* 9. 8. 12, 13. 18. *Ezra* 9. 6, 7.

3. Though they rejoyced in the mercy they had in their return, yet even that Mercy gave them cause so much to mourn for their sin against so good a God, *Rom.* 2. 4. *Ezra* 9. 8, 9, 10, 13, 14.

4. After they were come into their Countrey they sinned grievously on a sudden and in many things, *Hag.* 1. 4. and so had reason to come to the House of the Lord (it seems before it was quite finished) with trembling and weeping, *Ezra* 10. 1, 9. *Nehem.* 13. 7, 10, 17.

Howsoever therefore they returned rejoycing, *Psal.*6.12, *last*; Looking to their enjoyment of God and his Goodness towards them; yet it was with weeping also, looking upon themselves and their Sin, the impressions whereof they saw in their many-ways sad Condition. We find on the same day, weeping in one respect, and *great Mirth* on another, *Neh.*8. 9, 12.

But here three things may be added:

1. That this (as we said in the former question) may be referred to the times of Christ, unto whom many came in weeping in regard of their Sin? *Mark* 9. 24. *Luke* 7. 38. *Act.* 2. 37. and 16. 39.

2. And

2. And it may well be extended to that time when the Nation of the Jews ſhall be called, (in *futurum tempus complenda hæc prophetia ad huc reſtat.* Oecolamp.) when no doubt they ſhall come in weeping for their infinite deſpight done to him, whom they ſhall know then to be the true *Meſſiah* and not a malefactor, *Zech.* 12. 10. & 13. 1. Then ſhall that pierce the Nation to the heart which hath pricked ſo many of the Nation already, *Act.* 2. 37. 41.

3. And it's ordinary for God's Children ſtill, to come in to God weeping in their firſt Converſion, yea and afterward alſo when they deal ill with God, *Pſalm* 51. 8. 17. *Mat.* 26. 75. for though they know their Sin to be pardoned, yet it's a woful thing *Pſalm* 88. 15. to endure the hidings of Gods face, the terrours and perplexities of Spirit that a pardoned Sinner (whom God will never ſend to Hell) may be put to undergo; And withal, they mourn the more with tears of Love becauſe their ſins are forgiven, *Luk.* 7. 47. Laſtly, In any ſpecial ſtrait which puts the *Iſrael* of God to a wreſtling with God, how much, in how many, is that wreſtling accompanied with *weeping* as well as managed with Supplication? *Hoſ.* 12. 4.

Jer. 50. 4, 5.

They shall go and seek the Lord their God; They shall ask the way to Zion *with their faces thithermard.*

Qu. *What did the People of God intend in their flocking together? If it were to seek the Lord what need so much adoe? Is not he every-where?*

A. The Text expresseth their great end to be to seek their God, and to enjoy him by asking and travelling the way to *Zion.*

Here then is, 1. The end. 2. The way. 3. The firm setting of their faces to walk in that way.

First, the end is to seek the Lord *their God* as the Wife doth her own dear Husband whom she dearly wants, *Hos.* 2. 7. *Cant.* 3. 1, 2, 3. and 5, 6. *John* 20. 13, 15.

And the reason thereof is, because they and their God had been long separated, *Hos.* 5. 14, 15. It's true that God is every-where even in *Babylon*, as we see in the case of *Esther*, *Mordecai*, *Daniel*, and the three Children; Insomuch that Heathen enemies could say, out of their observation, of Gods appearing for his People,

ple,

ple, that if *Mordecai* were of the ſeed of the Jews, *Haman* ſhould ſure fall before him, *Eſth.* 6. 13. But yet, God is not every-where as he was in *Zion*, of which it is ſaid, *This is my reſt for ever and here will I dwell*, Pſal. 132. 14. Indeed, they ſaw his power in *Babylon* and his Providence, but not his Face and Countenance, *Iſa.* 8. 17. and 45. 15. *Pſal.* 80. 6, 7. Not but that they might ſee God in their Captivity if they looked after him with an eye of Faith, *Dan.* 6. 23. and thereby they lived while they were in that Condition, *Hab.* 2. 4. but they could not behold the beauty of the Lord in ſenſible manifeſtations as they did in the courts of his Houſe, *Pſal.* 27. 4. Thus therefore they ſeek him that they may ſee his Power and his Glory, *So as they have ſeen him in his Sanctuary*, Pſal. 63. 2. Therefore,

Secondly, Here's the way to enjoy their God as they had done, that is, by getting to *Zion*, which that they might do, they *ask the way*: Now there is a double asking,

1. By way of Prayer, *Mat.* 7. 7. and ſo theſe Jews, when they had Liberty to return from *Babylon* to their owncountrey, *ſought*, that is, *beſought* from God a

right way, that is, a safe and ready way to *Jerusalem* and *Zion*.

2. By way of enquiries, where-ever direction might be obtained. And so, there is a threefold asking the way to *Zion*, to wit,

1. To the earthly *Zion*, for they were to go thither by uncouth and unknown places; which the eldest of them, though they had gone once before, yet it was 70 years ago, and then, perhaps, not in the direct way, but such ways as the enemy pleased to carry them: And the younger never went it.

2. To the Spiritual mount *Zion*, that is, to the communion of the Christian Church, *Heb.* 12.22,23. *Gal.* 4.26. So divers Jews of old have enquired how to get into Christ, and come to a Christian State, *Joh.* 9.36, *Act.* 2.36, 37, 38, 41. & 9.6. And this also the so long rejected Jews will do, whensoever it shall please God to call them; they will believe, that is, come into Christ and the Christian Church, *Rom.* 11:26, 27, 31. for Baptism (which is an ingrafting into Christ and imbodying into the Church) still goeth along with Believing, *Act.* 2. 38. and *Act.* 8. 12, 13. 36, 37.

3. To the Heavenly *Zion*, which come in

in upon Coming to God and to Christ Spiritually and by Faith, as the happy end of it, *John* 10.27,28. *Luke* 23.42,43. The Thief that thus applied himself unto Christ, hath presently a promise and a possession of paradise: He that is a good member of the Church shall receive *the blessing from the Lord*, Psal. 24. 3, 5. *even Life for evermore*, Psal. 133. 3. See *Isa.* 35. 10. coming to mount *Zion* first, brings to the Spirits of just men made perfect: at last, *Heb.* 12. 22, 23. To this may be referred the woman of *Samaria*, her enquiry of the place and way of worship, *John* 4. 19, 20, 21. it's like it was as looking after her Salvation, and therefore Christ tells her, *Salvation is of the Jews*, v. 22. and the way to it is not to go to mount *Gerizzim*, but to mount *Zion*; so she calls out her City to the Saviour that was there, for *Saviours come upon mount Zion*, Obad. v. 21.

Thirdly, here's their firm resolution to come to *Zion*, set forth in their carriage, posture and deportment: It is *with their faces thitherward.*

This implieth three things: 1. That their intent was to get thither, as men intend to travel thither whither they set their faces, not to that place on which they

See Luke 9. 51. Ezek. 4. 3.

they turn theirs backs.

2. Their great desire to be there; the way and the journeys end are *in their hearts*, Psal. 84. 5. Which is therefore accompanied with a suitable endeavour, and a contending against all difficulties, *Psal.* 84. 6.

3. And the constancy also of their Resolution to go on still till they come thither, as they were wont to go from strength to strength till they met together *in Zion to appear before God there*, Psal. 84. 7. They did fill up to follow after God, *Numb.* 14. 24. with, *v.* 4. It's all summed up in this, that God's Servants (especially after God and they have been long asunder) 1. Greatly desire him, *Isa.* 26. 8, 9. 2: Earnestly seek after him, and *early*, Isa. 26. 9. using all means, sparing no Labour or Cost, 1 *Chron.* 29. 3. for the enjoyment of him, *Psal.* 63. 8. If God be not to be had in the Kingdom of *Israel*, they put the Key under the door, and go to *Judah*, 2 Chron. 11. 16. 2. They never rest till they have found him, *Cant.* 3. 4. If this be not he, they will seek for another, *Mat.* 11. 13. *John* 20. 15. *Moses* cannot find him in *Pharaoh's* court, and therefore he goes to seek him amongst Gods afflicted people, *Heb.* 11. 24.

24, 25. and there he found him.

They never lived with God really, that can live without him quietly.

Jer. 50. 5.

Come, Let us join our selves unto the Lord, in a perpetual Covenant that shall not be forgotten.

Qu. *What was the main end of the People of God in seeking their God in Zion?*

A. It was, 1. In general, to *join themselves unto the Lord*; 2. In particular, to join themselves to him by way of Covenant, 3. And that a *perpetual Covenant*, *never to be forgotten.*

First, to join themselves to the Lord] from whom they had been long disjoined two ways.

1. By their Sin and Disobedience, *Isa.* 59. 1, 2. especially, the sin of Idolatry, *Jer.* 2. 11. 13. Thereby they left their first Husband, *Hos.* 2. 7. and joined themselves to Idols, *Psal.* 106. 28. *Hos.* 2. 17. unto which we may add, the sin of infidelity, and their resting on Heathen-help which was another Idolatry; for they forsook God and fled to them, *Isa.* 57. 13. *Jer.* 2. 17, 18, 19. *Hos.* 7. 10, 11, and

and theſe things at laſt cauſed God to depart quite from them: Now when they returned to him, and meditated a Conjunction with him, then they expreſly renounced both theſe evils, *Hoſ.* 14.3,8. and bound themſelves by Covenant, to do all God's Commandments, *Neh.*9.29.

2. They were disjoined from the Lord by the ruine of Church and State, and their long-continued Captivity, whereby they were ſet far from the Lords Land, *Hoſ.*9.3. deprived of the Lords Ordinances, of the Lords wonted Protection, of his wonted Proviſion, and that ſo far as that they did eat their own Children, *Lament.*2.20. No marvel therefore if they ſet their Faces towards *Zion*, (when God ſet them free from *Babylon*) for the re-enjoying of God and all his Goodneſs. And thus alſo when Chriſt was come and the Goſpel preached, they glewed themſelves unto the Lord (as the word is, 1.*Cor.*6.17) that were before un-glewed; the Gentiles altogether, *Eph.* 2.12. and the *Jews* in a great meaſure; ſee *Act.*17.34. Gentiles glewed, and *Act.*2.41. Jews *added*, for the converted both of *Jews* and Gentiles were Baptized, and thereby entred into

into an Oath as it were, to ſtick faſt unto Jeſus Chriſt, as his faithful Servants and Soldiers unto their Lives end: So alſo the rejected *Jews* (ſo long diſjoined) when the Lord ſhall pleaſe to call them, ſhall be joined to the Lord, or (as the Scripture ſpeaks) be *graffed again*, Rom. 11.23,24.

Secondly, This joining is here ſaid to be, by way of Covenant] And that

1. Becauſe this hath ever been Gods way of Conjunction with himſelf; to wit, by a Covenant of Works before man's fall, and then a Covenant of Grace, which hath been ſince, and which will ever be, for it is an everlaſting Covenant: ſo, at Chriſt's coming, when the Jews were invited to Chriſt and to Chriſtianity, it was done by preſenting unto them the Promiſes, *Act.*2.39. and they were called upon under the Title of the *Children of the Covenant*, *Act.*3.25,26. when the Gentiles alſo came unto the Church, it was in a way of Covenant, and upon Covenant-terms, thus expreſſed, *I will call them my People that were not my People*, Rom.9.25,26. And the calling of the *Jews* at laſt we find to be upon a Covenant-account, *Rom.*11.27.

2. Becauſe they needed greatly, and now

now expected a restauration by the pardon of their sin, and restoring of their state, *Jer.*33.7,8. *Hos.*14.4,5. Now the forgiving of sin, *Jer.*31.34. prevention of danger and recovery from Church-calamity, *Neh.*9.32. hath still been in a way of Covenant (*Levit.*26.42.) according to the Law of God called *the book of the Covenant*, 2 King.23.2. see 2 *Chron.*15.12. & 29.10. 2 *Chron.*34.31, 32. *Ezra* 10.2,3. *Neh.*9.38.

3. Because a Covenant sets all right on both sides, binding man to the duty that God expecteth, and in that way giving him an assurance of the good that God promiseth: see *Deut.*19.16. *to the end.* Peace therefore and all good is like to be had, nay, is sure to be had by Covenant-making, and Covenant-keeping; for Covenant-mercy will never be wanting where there is a care of Covenant-duty, *Dan.*9.4.

4. Because, at Christ's coming (to which this Prophecy refers) the whole Church, consisting of *Jews* and Gentiles, was to be joined to the Lord in a New-Testament, (*Heb.* 8.10, 11,12, 13. and 9.15.) that is, in a new-administration of the old and ever-abiding Covenant of Grace: So that comprehending Gospel-

pel-times within this Prophecy, and those *Jews* that came in them, there was a new Work to be done, and a new way of God to be walked in, though not for substance; that is, a reformed and refined way, *Heb.*9.10. unto which they that would then join themselves to the Lord must apply themselves, *Joh.*4. 23,24.

Thirdly, this is described to be a *perpetual Covenant never to be forgotten*, which is true of every Covenant made with God according to his will; but two reasons may be given why this expression is here used, *viz.*

1. Because the old Covenant, that is, the Covenant in the old administration, was broken and forgotten by the Body of the Jews, *Jer.*31.32 *Heb.*8.9. for indeed, they turned it into a Covenant of Works, *Ro.* 9.32 and so break wilfully what they could not keep perfectly, whereby they were disregarded and destroyed, albeit it was not so in those times with the faithful, who looking upon it as a Covenant of Grace, did by Grace derive it from that done in new-Testament-times, acceptably keep it, and obtained pardon through Christ for the breaches of it. But now in the new-

Testa-

Teſtament, there is (for thoſe that be really and inwardly within the Covenant) Grace to keep it, ariſing from what hath been done in theſe Goſpel-times, and from Goſpel-diſpenſations, when the Law impoſed an hard task and gave no ſtraw or ſtrength whereby to perform it, *Heb.*7.19. And withal now there is a greater meaſure of Grace both for Obedience and Perſeverance, whereby the Covenant becomes more clearly, than ever heretofore, a perpetual Covenant, not only in regard of the gracious reſolution of thoſe that be in it to keep it and to keep cloſe to God for ever; not only in regard of a greater Power of Grace to make good this reſolution, but alſo by a clearer manifeſtation that God himſelf will make it good: for thus the Covenant runs; I will make an *everlaſting Covenant*, for *I will not turn away from them and I will put my fear into their hearts that they ſhall not depart from me*, *Jer.*32. 40. ſince therefore it cannot fail on either part, it muſt needs be *perpetual.*

2. Becauſe, the new-Teſtament adminiſtration ſhall continue to the end of the World, *Matt.*28.20. 1 *Cor.*11.26. *Heb.*7.21, 22, 24.

Now

Now in this coming in for this glorious end, they encourage one another, *come and let us join our ſelves*, for they that come to God in good earneſt love and move to have many with them, *Act.* 26.29. for Gods greater glory, *Pro.*14. 28. the better drawing in of others, and their own greater comfort by a greater company: ſee *Iſa.*2.3 *Zech.*8.21. &c. *Job.* 1.41,42,45.& 4.28,29

Lam. 3. 64, 65, 66.

Render unto them a recompence, O Lord, according to the work of their hands.

Give them ſorrow of heart, thy curſe unto them; Perſecute and deſtroy them in anger from under the Heavens of the Lord?

Qu. *Is it lawful for us to uſe ſuch imprecations as theſe? or what uſe is to be ade of them?*

A. Juſtice on the deſperate enemies of Gods truth and party is, (and by theſe words may appear to be) lawfully deſired of God. If we knew ſuch and ſuch perſons were and ever would be ſo, we might lawfully pray againſt them by name.

Now particular Persons are not known to be such by ordinary men, but by such as have an extraordinary Spirit of discerning; such as the Prophets had: hence there are such fearful imprecations, *Psal.* 109. wherein there is an eye on the Person of *Judas*, v. 8. *Act.* 1. 20. And such also as the Apostles had, and therefore no wonder if *Paul* prayed against the Person, 2 *Tim.* 4. 14. of *Alexander* Coppersmith, of whose wickedness there was not only an Experimental manifestation, but the state of whose Person also might be known to *Paul* by Divine Revelation, such as men have not in these days; And yet, from experimental indications, and eminent evidences, that *Julian* the Apostate committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, the Church, in those days prayed God to confound him, (though he were their Liege Lord, and though they prayed for other Heathen and persecuting Emperours;) and so he did.

Now there ought to be in those that pour forth such dreadful prayers, besides a Spirit of discerning, an eminently-composed Spirit, having in it a pure Zeal of Gods Glory: So it was with the Prophets; by the same Spirit whereby they propheſied, by the same

ſame they prayed againſt the enemies of God and his People. The *Spirit of God* came upon him, *Zechariah* the ſon of *Jehojada*, who concludes thus with thoſe that oppoſed him and ſlew him. *The Lord look upon it and require it*, 2 Chron. 24. 22. and the Lord heard the prayer, *v.* 23, 24, 25. Thus *Paul* filled with the Holy Ghoſt, ſo thundered againſt *Elymas*, that (albeit we find not what he ſaith formed into a Prayer, yet) it had, the ſame ſad effect as if it had been ſo, *Act.* 13. 9, 10, 11.

Now, we having not ſuch a diſcerning Spirit, nor ſuch a purity of Spirit, as thoſe extraordinary Servants of God had when they were about the Spirits work: we may not take upon us to do as they did, but only pray in general; Lord, whom thou knoweſt to be implacable enemies not belonging to thine election, cut them off: See *Pſal.* 79. 12. *Judg.* 5. 31.

The reaſon why we may thus pray is the Word of God, which ſaith concerning the enemies of the People of God, that (vengeance and recompence belonging to God) *their foot ſhall ſlide in due time*, Deut. 32. 35. Now, when there is ſuch a promiſe ſuitable to the ſad Eſtate and preſent

sent necessities of the Church, why may not we present a Prayer, (with respect to Gods Glory, and his Churches Safety) suitable to that promise? so in the case here, the Prayer, *v.* 64. is directly founded upon *Jeremies* prophesy and Gods promise, *Jer.* 51. 6. 24. 36. 56. And that *v.* 65. is suitable to *Jer.* 51. 29. The land shall tremble and sorrow, so for praying for a curse, it is not without a Scripture-ground, *Gen.* 12. 3. *Psalm.* 109. 17. Nor that *persecute and destroy them*, v. 66. we find the like, *Psal.* 83. 15. 17.

So that there is sufficient reason of desiring revenge, *Psal.* 94. 1. (so that it be not with a distempered and selfish Spirit) upon all irreconcileable enemies whatsoever; and these general Prayers of the Church are applied of God to such particular enemies who-ever they be, and so they are in woful case.

Obj. But the new Testament saith, *Pray for them that despightfully use you and persecute you*, Mat. 5. 44. Rom. 12. 14. And Christ and *Steven* prayed for those that kild them.

A. To this it may be said in general, That as the Love of God in Christ is more revealed and shed forth in Gospel-times, so

ſo we ſhould expreſs more Love to others, not only to good men, but to *all men*, 1 Theſ. 3. 12. Tit. 3.2.4. Gal.4.12. 2 Cor. 12. 15.

Particularly. 1. We muſt take heed of praying againſt them that oppoſe themſelves againſt us furiouſly, out of ignorance, imitation and perſwaſion of others, or out of paſſion and prejudice. Thus Chriſt prayed for thoſe that crucified him; *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*, Luk. 23. 34 So *Stevens* prayer, *Lord lay not this ſin to their Charge*, Act. 7. 60. may ſeem to reſpect thoſe that did what they did againſt him out of a blind Zeal, for he is very ſtern againſt thoſe of them that were obſtinate, *v.* 51, 52, 53, 54. And whereas *Saul* is conceived to be converted by (and ſure had the benefit of) that Prayer, he declareth that he obtained mercy becauſe what he did ill, he did *ignorantly*, 1 Tim. 1. 13, Unto all ignorant opposers, mercy ſhould be ſhewed and meekneſs, 2 *Tim.* 2. 25. *Tit.* 2. 2. As alſo, to thoſe that be inſtigated by others, *Mat.* 27. 20. with *Luk.* 23. 34. *Gal.* 5. 8. 10, 12. Paul declares good thoughts of the troubled, but prayes fearfully againſt the *Troublers*, Gal. 1. 7. Act. 13. 10

2. The evil cause or course that wicked men defend against God and his People, we may pray against but not so against their persons. We find not that *David* prayed against, the Person, but against the *Counsel* of *Achitophel*, 2 Sam. 15.31. So the first Christians prayed not against the persons of them that sat in Counsel against the Apostles, but against their proceedings, *Acts* 4. 29. Or, if in such prayers, the Persons be sometimes mentioned, yet we find in Scripture that it is in reference to their works, *Neh.* 6. 14. as a vile Person, is, and ought to be contemned, *Psal.* 15. 4.

3. Whatsoever is done in Scripture by the extraordinary Servants of God in, extraordinary cases, yet it will be safe for us, in stead of mentioning particular persons, to wrap them up in the general evil cause and course that we ought to pray against, as *Paul* doth, *Gal.* 5. 12. If particular persons come under the general head of disturbers of the Church of God, and of enemies to the Truth of God, then they justly fall under Church-imprecations; which yet are not directed against this or that man, but in a generality, against this and that man, without pointing to any, as enemies to the Kingdom of

of Christ, and Souls of Christians.

4. We are not to pray at all against our own private and personal enemies, as seeking to be revenged of them (though we may pray that God would restrain them, and defend us from their malice, *Psal* 119. 121, 122.) This is the meaning of the new-Testament precepts, to pray for enemies, *Mat.* 5.44. *Rom.* 12. 14. 19, 20.

5. But against the enemies of God, his Cause, his Church, *Psalm* 94. 1, 2, 5. we may pray, *Judges* 5. 31. *Neh.* 4. 5.

Yet not without limitation; as, 1. It must be done with a pure Zeal, that is, not because we suffer by them, but truly and clearly and meerly, & for that very reason because they are enemies to God and undoers of his People, when else we wish them all good: So it was with *Jeremy*; he spake good before God for his people, *Jer.* 18, 20. yet see what dreadful prayers he made against them, because they were such enemies to God that they sought to kill him that spake from God to them, that God might not kill them, *v.* 21, 22, 23. so *Psal.* 74. 22, 23. their prayers against enemies are put on Gods account; as also, Psal. 79. 6, 7, 10, 12.

2. It must be done not absolutely but orderly; that is, 1. we should pray for their Conversion (for a *Saul* may be converted) 2. for their Restraint, that God would change or check their hearts, as he did *Esau's*, Gen 33. 10. or bind their tongues and hands as he did *Laban's*, *Gen.* 31. 29. But 3. the highest and heaviest Prayers, are to be presented before God (and for God) against those enemies of himself and his people that are incurable and ever will be incorrigible: Who such be, the Lord knows and not we, and therefore we must leave our Prayers with him, to do what he will with them; yea we may pray him to confound and trouble them for ever rather than that he should not be known to be *most high over all the Earth.* When we aim purely at that end, we may pray against desperate enemies, that they may be *put to shame and perish*, *Psalm* 83. 16, 17, 18. & 129. 5. But all carnal and selfish mixtures, motives and motions are to be abandoned: And we must know *of what Spirit we are*, Luk. 9. 55.

Q. *What use may we make of those prayers in Scripture which it is dangerous for us to imitate, who have not the Spirit or Patience of Prophets?*

A. 1.

A. 1. We may look upon them with much comfort, as Propheſies (though formed into a Prayer) of the woful ſtate and end of the enemies of God and his People: what is put into this Prayer here was put into *Jeremie's* Propheſy before (as hath been ſhewed, *p.* 54.)

2. What they prayed more particularly, we may make uſe of in a generality, and direct it againſt the Kingdom of the Devil; which is no more than to pray, *Thy Kingdom come*; for how can the Kingdom of Chriſt come, if the Kingdom of Satan do not come down? Rev. 18.6. 20.

Ezek. 3.20:

When a Righteous man doth turn from his Righteouſneſs, and commit iniquity, and I lay a ſtumbling block before him, he ſhall die &c.

Qu. *How can God be ſaid to lay a ſtumbling-block before a Righteous man backſliding?*

A. Firſt, it is to be conſidered that by a Righteous man here is not meant, a man Righteous before God by Faith, through Chriſt's Righteouſneſs imputed to him, whereunto is ever joyned the Righteouſneſs of God in him, where-

by

by he becomes a new creature 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. for such never fall quite away, though they often fall in the way. *Adam* fell after the first Creation, *Eccles.* 7.29. none so fall after the second, *Eph.* 4. 24,25. & 2.10. *Jer.* 32. 40. *John* 10. 28. *Psal.* 1.6. 1 *Pet.* 1.5. yet such an one may fall very low in regard of the degrees of grace, comforts of the Spirit, and suavities of Religion: but one *Ezekiel* or other will raise him up again. But by a * righteous man in this place, (and upon supposition of a total and final fall) is meant one righteous before men: As (1) In his own or other men's account, *Luk.* 15.7 & 16.15. yea, perhaps in good men's account; because charity binds to think the best, 1 *Cor.* 13.7. (2) By profession, *Act.* 8.13. (3) By a righteousness in matter of doctrine, *Mark.* 12. 32,34. and in divers parcels of outward practise.

Secondly, by Gods laying a stumbling-block before such a righteous man; (righteous not by the Reality of Righteousness within); We may not imagin that God puts any unrighteousness into any such man or any man; or that he inclines his heart to any evil, *James* 1.13. But two things may be understood by it.

1. In

* *justus dicitur δοραστικὸς non κατ' ἀλήθειαν, quales sunt hypocritæ et Apostatæ de qualibus sic ait Augustinus, credendum est quosdam de filis perditionis non accepto dono perseverandi usque in finem aliquando fideliter ac juste vivere ac postea cadere, De correptione et Grat. Lib 17. Tom. 90*

1. In a more ſpiritual ſence Gods leaving of a backſlider to his own backſliding heart; yea giving him up to it, *Pſal.* 81.12. or to *Satan*, 2 *Theſ.* 2.10, 11,22. yea farther God (in his juſt judgment) may raiſe up ſuch Providences as his corrupt heart will be ſure to make a ſtumbling-block of; a Perſecution, *Matt.* 13.21. nay, the very preaching of the Word doth it, and is ſent to do it as a juſt puniſhment of former wilfulneſs, *Iſa.* 6.10. *Luk.* 2.34. *Matt.* 21. 44. Men lay one ſtumbling-block, *Ezek.* 14. 4. and God laies another.

2. In a more outward ſence, this may be underſtood, not as a ſtumbling-block of iniquity, as *Ezek.* 14.7. But for iniquity; that is, as the puniſhment of God upon them for their Backſlidings, and a tottering in their ſtate to utter ruin; and (indeed) this and the former are both joyned together in *Iſa.* 8.14, 15.

It is a very dreadful thing when God ſhall make any thing a ſtumbling ſtone to a man either way; but more dreadful when he makes every thing, yea and many things every way.

Yet ſuch (though not all ſuch) may by the means of Grace and Grace of God

God be converted, and turn again, *Luk.* 22.32. as here by the terrours of God ſet forth in the Miniſtry of his Prophets, and perhaps alſo by his puniſhment brought upon them, (ſuch Rods ſometime beat folly out of the hearts of baſtards, drive wanderers into the right-way, *as well as upright Walkers* on in it) and ſo by their repenting they may prevent utter and endleſs periſhing, *Ezek.* 18.30,31,32. *I will judg you, O houſe of* Iſrael, *every one according to his ways, ſaith the Lord God: Repent and turn your ſelves from all your Tranſgreſſions; ſo iniquity ſhall not be your ruin: Caſt away from you all your Tranſgreſſions; For I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dyeth, ſaith the* Lord God, *therefore turn your ſelves, and live ye.*

Ezek. 20.25.

Wherefore I gave them alſo ſtatutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they ſhould not live.

Qu. *How is God ſaid to give ſtatutes that were not good, and that tend to death; when all his Laws and commands ever were and are good,* Nehem. 9. 13. Rom. 7. 12.

A.

A. 1. Firſt ſome underſtood this of thoſe Decrees and Ordinances of God, and of thoſe Judgments that tended to the ruin of that Rebellious ſtate, which may be ſaid not to be good, becauſe they were not good to them, as 1 *Kings* 22.8. not for them; and diſpleaſing and deſtructive, for which ſee and conſider *Ezek.* 14.21. *Hoſ.* 10.10. *Hab.* 1.12. *Zeph.* 2.2. It's the Lord that gives the deſtroying ſword a charge, and every Judgment a commiſſion, *Jer.* 47.7. But, So Tremelus in Loc.

Secondly, This is generally taken otherwiſe, and it ſeems to be otherwiſe meant here, *v.* 39. where they are bid go ſerve every one his *Idol*; that is, they are left and given up to it, there being no hope of holding them from it.

Therefore this giving them Statutes that were not good, may comprehend theſe things following.

1. That there were and they had ſuch Statutes, that is, Statutes enſnaring them to Idolatry and Profaneneſs; and that not ſo much at any one time, as in the times of Idolatrous and wicked Kings ſucceſſively; beginning with *Jeroboam's* Calves, and continuing in the Idolatrous Statutes of *Omri* and *Ahab*, and men of that ſtamp, *Micha.* 6.16. Nor was it thus

thus only in *Israel* but in *Judah* also; as we see in the days and ways of that wicked *Jehoram*, who caused the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem* to commit whoredom, and compelled *Judah* thereunto, 2 *Chron.*21.22. and it is expresly said of *Manasseh*, that he made *Judah* to err and do worse than the Heathen, 2 *Chron.*33. 9.

2. That such Statutes may be said to be given of God, *viz.* providentially and in course of justice: (1) By giving them those Idolatrous Kings in his anger, who (together with their statesmen) would give and were left to give them such Idolatrous Laws, *Hos.* 13.10,11. (2) By palling out in the same times, and sending among them by his just Providence, such Priests and Prophets as by whom the Idolatrous decrees of Princes were published and palliated, and they who refused to obey them, were proclaimed factious and seditious men; as we read in 1 *Kings* 22.13. *Jer.*23.13. 15. especially *Kings* 7.10. *Ezek.*14.9. & 22.26,28. (3) By leaving the People to be ensnared by the Commands of the one and the flatteries of the other; through their own fault in two respects, *viz.*

1. Through

1. Through the darkneſs of their underſtanding, whereby they could not, yea wilful blindneſs whereby they cared not, ſought not, to diſcern the evils and abominations of Laws croſſing the Law of God

2. Through the vileneſs of their Affections or the ſervility of their wills, whereby if they ſaw the evil of ſuch things yet they did not ſhun it; but ſubmitted their necks to all yokes, were willing to walk after the Commandment, and loved to have it ſo, *Jer.*5.31. *Hoſ.*5.11.

In all this there was, 1. A ſinful part which was the Rulers, Prieſts, Prophets, and Peoples, as hath been already proved.

2. A Judicial part which was Gods, not by darting any darkneſs into their underſtandings; but by not imparting any light, but leaving them to their fooliſh and darkned hearts, *Deut.*29.14. Not by infuſing any malignity into their wills, but by not introducing any conquering Grace and Power. Now becauſe this pænal part is Gods, therefore he is ſaid to give: So that God did not give Laws not good, as a Lawgiver; but as a judg, by giving them into the hands of thoſe that gave them and promoted them, and

by

by giving them up that would not obey him to obey them: And thus it was also in the *Babylonish* Captivity with this wicked Peoples good-will and resolution to comply, *Ezekiel* 20.3.23.9. And thus it is still when an incorrigible Church is cast under Popish or Pagan Governours: Oh! it is their just and saddest judgment to be given up to Laws not good, that will not obey the holy, just, and good Laws of God: As an enraged Father says to an incurable Son be gone, (*Abi hinc in malam Rem*) and so leaves him to the Laws of Harlots and Varlots that will be his Companions, Counsellors, yea and Commanders also, *Eccles.*7.26. So God provoked punishes by giving men up to themselves, and leaving them to their own hearts lusts, *Psal.*81.11,12. *Matth.* 23.32. 2 *Thes.* 2.10, 11, 12. How much better is it to be given up to state-undoing, or body-tormenting judgments, than to be given up to Soul-undoing Laws and Lusts? The greatest evil of suffering is less than the least evil of Sin.

Dan. 6. 10.

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was ſigned, he went into his houſe and his windows being open in his Chamber toward Jeruſalem, *he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime?*

Q. *What may be conceived to be the reaſon of* Daniels *opening his windows in the time of prayer?*

A. Of *Daniels* appearing, as he did in this great buſineſs theſe following reaſons may be given.

Firſt, the ſtate of the buſineſs, now in hand, which was this; when the Preſidents and Princes (that envied him) could find no fault or unfaithfulneſs in him, in regard of his carriage in his place, and the Kings affairs, they reſolved to try whether they could find out any thing againſt him in reference to the law of his God; for they ſaw well they had no other way to have their will of him. This being their deſign, they ſo contrived and carried it on by a Decree which they drew the King to confirm, that it was brought to this iſſue; Either *Daniel*

must desert the law of his God, or be exposed to the Den of Lions: So that his case seems to be much like that of *Mordecai*, who was singled out as Gods Champion to enter the lists with *Haman*, that was suffered to procure a Church-ruining Decree, out of a purpose that the Lord had to advance his Church and himself (the God of the Church) in the eyes of all the world; This being the case with *Mordecai*, he will bow to *Haman*: This being the case of *Daniel*, he will bow to God, come what will come of it. No marvel: since, for him to yield or dissemble now, was to shew that he durst not stand to the Law and Worship of his God, and therefore utterly unlawful; the divine rule being this, as to give to *Cæsar* that which is *Cæsars* (which he had still done) so to give unto God that which is Gods; which he was now to do, and not leave God without witness, especially in a thing that was not only against the law of Scripture, but of nature also; for against that it was to leave God un-served (or un-served as to the notice of men, and so as not to dare to do it in their sight) for a moneth together.

Q. *But why then did not* Daniel *stand up*

up againſt ſo ungodly a Decree, to hinder the malicious proceeding of the Princes in it, and the Kings blind aſſent to it?

A. Becauſe (it ſeems, through the ſubtilty of the Princes) he was abſent at the contrivance (when, if preſent, he ought to have ſpoken againſt it, and no doubt would) Here it is ſaid *he knew the writing was ſigned*, but we find not that he knew any thing of it before; and now it was to no purpoſe for him to ſtir, that being fully done which by the laws of State could not be revoked. It being to no purpoſe therefore for him to go to the King (for he could not help himſelf) *v.* 14. 15. *he went into his houſe*, and unto his God, nothing being now left him but to conſider what he was to do for God, and to wait what God would do for him. But to go on

Secondly, we muſt conſider *Daniel's* place and ſtation; he was a publick perſon, obſerved by all, and that in reference to his Religion and the law of his God, which he (being a kind Repreſentative of the whole Church of God) muſt either now ſtand to, or elſe the Worſhip and Glory of God muſt fall to the ground in his own Church and amongſt his own Company: *Daniel*

therefore had great cauſe to ſay (as *Nehemiah*, *cap.* 6. 11.) *ſhould ſuch a man as I flee?* Should ſuch a man as I Flinch? Thirdly, It may be added that it was his uſe and cuſtom to pray *three times a day*; In the morning before he went about his buſineſs, at noon, and Meal-time, *Act.* 10. 9, 10. *Pſal.* 55. 17. And at night when his buſineſs was diſpatched, and he was to take his Reſt. Having ſtill held (and held forth to the view of others) this courſe; it was no time for him now to intermit it.

1. Becauſe it is a duty lying in the bowels of Religion, ſo to divide our time as to ſet apart daily ſome vacant times for the Service of God; at leaſt, not to leave him a month without daring to have it known that any prayer is made to him: This is the more conſiderable here, becauſe, by this decree, not only the true God, but God in the generality, and any thing called God was excluded, and the King only ſet up to be ſought to for thirty days.

2. Becauſe now there was more need to own God than at other times, there being ſo few that durſt do it: The leſs reaſon therefore there was why *Daniel* ſhould deſiſt, whom all men knew to have done it.

Qu. *But*

Q. *But the queſtion is about the manner of doing*, viz. *with* his windows open; *what need that?*

A. Yes, of that there was a neceſſity alſo, becauſe it was obſerved before, not only that he prayed, but that he uſed to pray in ſuch a manner; which was not in way of oſtentation (it appears here it was his danger rather than his Honour among thoſe Heathens) but it was done in way of publick Confeſſion and open acknowledgment of his God; and therefore it is ſaid, he did it as *aforetime*, and why ſo, but to continue compleatly the wonted acknowledgment now there was more need of it than there was wont to be: Hence he now uſed all the ceremonies and circumſtances of Worſhip which he was obſerved to do it with before; as

1. It was done *in his Chamber*, not in a low obſcure Vault.

2. *His windows being opened*; not in a Secret corner of the room, or with Shutting window-leaves; but all that opened their eyes might ſee what he was about, and ſo he was more open to his after-accuſation, *v.* 11, 13.

3. *He kneeled upon his knees*, a poſture that ſpeaks itſelf to them that behold it, how that they are worſhipping and pray-

ing to God that uſe it.

4. His windows were open *towards Jeruſalem*; becauſe there had been, yea and there would be again God's ſpecial preſence, (in the faith whereof, they might Look thither, in this place wherein they were ſo far removed from it:) withal, when the Temple was firſt built by *Solomon*, this looking towards *Jeruſalem* and that houſe, was put in, 2 *Chron.* 6. 20, 21. 37, 38. with reſpect to their being in Captivity, as that which was ſtill to be ſuppoſed, and (in ſpecial) to be made uſe of when they were in ſuch a condition. See *Jonah* 2. 4.

5. He obſerved the ſame times too, *Praying and Giving thanks* (notwithſtanding all the Lions) *before his God, three times a day.*

Thus as *Mordecai* would neither bow nor budg, neither *ſtand up nor move*, nor do *Haman any reverence*, *Eſther.* 3. 2. and 5. 9. So *Daniel* will not leave an hoof behind him, nor abate an hair of his former homage to God; for he that in ſuch things yields at all, is like at laſt to yield all.

Fourthly, Had he not done thus, great evils would have ariſen in regard of himſelf and others.

1. As

1. As for himself, whereas his body only would be endangered by disobeying the Decree (and yet its conceived, he might have a Revelation from God to secure him, as to that;) Sure he had, a corroboration) I say, whereas his bodily Life only was at Stake: If he had been cowardly in this case, his Soul would have been endangered, according to our Saviour's threatning of denying those that deny him before men, *before his Father and the Angels*, Mat. 10.33. Luke 12.9. affrighting also from the fear of men, by the fire of hell, *Mat.* 10.28. For Confession is necessary for Salvation, *Rom.* 10.9,10. And the Confession should becompleat also without giving place in the least to the prejudice of the truth of God, *Gal.* 2.5.12. and therefore much less of the true God. Jun. in Loc.

2. As for others, his being off and on, would have been an horrible offence: Both to the Heathen and the Jews.

1. To the Heathen, and those out of the Church (with whom he had to do in this business) for would not they have said (if he had shrunk) that he had puld in his horns, the Lions had tamed him, he durst not stand to his tackling, to his Religion, to his God, nor trust him with his Life; nor own him as a God able to

deliver him. In this offence, the King himself would have been the highest, for he found *Daniel* so Faithful to him, and so Faithful to God, whom he *served continually*, v.20. (even then when he was to be thrown into a Lions Den for it) that he declares himself to be convinced, that if his God were *able to deliver him*, he would deliver him; So that the matter came to this Issue, whether he believed his God was able to deliver him; what an horrible stumbling-block therefore would this have been to the King, and dishonour to God, if he had not stood it out? yea to *Daniel* himself as having less Faith than his heathen King; whom he so much honoured, save only that he preferred God before him?

2. To those in the Church, who must need have been taught, yea compelled, *Gal.*2.14. to fall from God to Atheism if a Person so eminent for Piety as *Daniel* was, had fain before them upon all these considerations. *Daniel* did not say, (and it had been an high sin in, him if he should have said) *A lion is in the way*; therefore, *he trusted to his God*, v.23. contemned the Lions, and went on (in full) with all compleatness and constancy in his holy way:

Which

Which courſe of his, is abundantly confirmed of God, in that the ſame God that ſo confirmed him by his Grace, miraculouſly preſerved him by his Power, ſo that the Lions tore his accuſers not him.

And in all this, he moſt really, and moſt nobly fulfilled Chriſt's precept, *give unto Ceſar that which is Ceſars, and to God that which is Gods*; So that he could ſay (with a moſt clear and calm conſcience) *Before him, innocency was found in me; And alſo, Before thee, O King, I have done no hurt*, v.22.

Dan.6.10.

And his windows being open in his Chamber, &c.

Qu. *Whether doth* Daniels *example bind a man in ſuch a caſe to pray ſo openly, when the ſame duty may be performed ſecretly, and ſo the danger ſhunned?*

A. In general; Danger may be ſhunned lawfully (yea and ought to be) if the duty required of God may be performed intirely without running into that danger; otherwiſe, when duty and danger meet, and the danger is neceſſarily infolded in the duty, then duty muſt be preferred in obedience to Gods Command, and the danger left to Gods Providence

vidence; as it was by the three Children *Dan.*3. 16, 17, 18. *Moreover* (with reſpect to *Daniel*, and to ſpeak to this matter more fully) if we compare *Daniels* caſe with others, we muſt obſerve that in his caſe, there was not only required, 1. an act of Religion, that is, the worſhip of God in Prayer; but alſo, 2. an acknowledgment of Religion, and of the God he prayed to: Briefly, Not only a worſhipping of him, but a witneſſing for him. In regard of the former (and if nothing but that had been now required) it might have been enough for him to have prayed to God in ſecret; that might have quieted his Conſcience as to the worſhipping of God: But becauſe he was alſo to give a teſtimony to his God, and to his Religion; therefore a ſecret Worſhip, would not ſatisfie the caſe, and reach to that duty which was now incumbent upon him: Hence it will follow that whereſoever there is the like caſe, there is an Obligation to the like courſe (at leaſt for ſubſtance): when God requires not only a prayer but a profeſſion, and calls us forth to be his witneſſes, we muſt come into the open Court; for though his Worſhip be performed, yet the ſecrecy of it is a ſacriledg, and robbeth God of his full due.

But

But otherwise a great difference there is, between the case here and other more ordinary cases of confession: For

1. Here was a Catholick cause] It's true that *Daniels* particular Person and perdition was specially aimed at; yet their spight was not only against him: It was the Law of his God also, which they sought to wound through his sides, and make the Lions devour him and his Religion both.

2. This cause was to be managed before Heathens, that called in question the Power of the God of *Israel*, and so it amounted and rose up to this height, whether their Gods were as good as his, or his were the only true God: And this became the Issue of it, *Dan.6.26.*

3. Here (as in the case of *Mordecai*) there was an eminent and extraordinary (at least providential) Call; so that both of them were singled out to be the Lords Champions, to enter the lists with his Pagan-enemies; And therefore the same God that did (as it were) provoke the Devil to a combate with *Job* his Champion, irritating Satan with his Commendation, *Job* 1.8. So ordered the matter also in *Mordecai* and *Daniel* his days, that those heroick Persons should

ſhould even dare the enemies of the Church to do their worſt. Thus it was in the caſe of *Mordecai*, more plainly, for that cauſed and provoked to a diſmal Decree: Now, its true that here in the caſe of *Daniel*, the Decree was paſſed before he knew of it (or at leaſt, was called to have any thing to do with it) and yet the opening of his Windows before may be thought to provoke to it: But (howſoever) ſo far *Daniel* ſtird the Coals, and blew up the fire that was made, as to try it out to their teeth, and to do what he ſhould (and what he was accuſtomed) let them do what they could and the Lions to help them. The Cauſe was moſt glorious and the Call was moſt clear.

4. God did arm (together with his call) thoſe ſelect Servants and Witneſſes of his, with extraordinary abilities and courage to carry on and hold forth to the World, the Cauſe and Intereſt of God, and to fight as his combatants) ſo good and glorious (though ſo dangerous) a fight: Now when God puts ſuch a fortitude into the Spirits of his Worthies (as into *Luthers* he did) this ſpeaks (as it were from heaven) to them more than to others, to ſtand up in the cauſe of

of God like that renowned *David*, 1 *Sam.*17.26.29. and *Paul*, *Act.*17.16.

By this it may appear that the cauſe and caſe here ſtands upon different terms than are ordinarily preſented in in the courſe of Providence: And therefore few in all Ages, are ſo remarkably called out to Confeſſion as *Daniel* was.

Yet is Confeſſion and ſtanding for God (as to the ſubſtance of it, and when there is juſt cauſe for it) a common and a ſtanding duty, *Math.*10.32,33.

But it belongeth not to the negative Precepts (like that, *Thou ſhall not kill, nor commit Adultery, nor ſteal*, &c. unto the obſervation whereof all are *at all times* bound) but it is to be referred to the Affirmative Precepts, (ſuch as thoſe are, *to pray*, *Viſit the ſick*, *give alms*) which bind *at all times*, but not *to all times*. The meaning then is not that a man muſt never forbear to give in his teſtimony, or that a man is always bound to divulge what he thinks of Religion, though a Den or Death will evidently follow upon it; but the time and ſeaſon when God calls for it, *Rev.*2.13. is to be obſerved: Then therefore *Eliſha* appeared for God, 2 *King.*5.28. and *Gehazi* (not obſerving the time) did the contrary, *v.*26. Only

Only, It belongs to the negative Precepts thus far, that there must never be a perfidious dissimulation though we be not always tied to an open Confession; nor always to the utmost Confession: If a man flie in time of persecution, though this be not so high an appearing for God and Religion as resisting to blood is, yet it hath in it a real Confession (in Opposition to the enemies of Religion) because he leaves his Country, Friends, State, and so suffers many ways, rather than that the cause of God should suffer by his abiding under tentation, and being drawn to any thing that should be a prejudice to it. The question then will be double.

Qu. *First*, *In what case a publick and open Confession may be forborn?*

A. 1. When it is not required of us by those that have Authority (though perhaps, we be pressed to it out of a malicious petulancy) *Prov.* 26. 4. *Mat.* 27. 39, 40, &c.

2. Nor any just cause for it; but it will rather do hurt than good: Thus *Mordecai* will not have *Esther* to shew her kinred or her people, *Esth.* 2. 10. for thereby (the Nation of the Jews being so

ſo hated of the Heathen, *Eſth.* 9. 1.) She and the Church of God might have fared the worſe; but the ſame *Mordecai* at another time told them he was *a Jew*, Eſth. 3. 4. becauſe then the cauſe of God was to be tried, and all the world was to be given to underſtand that there was no need to fear to own the name of a Jew. See *Eſth.* 6. 13. when the Glory of the God of the Jews lay at Stake.

For this reaſon Chriſt oft commanded Silence to others, becauſe it would obſcure his doctrine, (which he would have eſteemed moſt) by a leſs profitatable, ſeaſonable, and leſs ſolid applauding of his Miracles; And partly, becauſe they did thereby ſo preſs upon him for bodily cures, that it was an hindrance to his preaching, *Mark.* 1. 45. See *Mat.* 8. 4. and 9. 30.

And for this cauſe alſo, Chriſt was ſilent himſelf to admiration, *Matt.* 27. 12, 14. *John* 19. 9, 10. Some things being ſo frivolous that they were not worthy an anſwer; but eſpecially becauſe he would not hinder his ſuffering by his pleading and that real confeſſion which was to be made by his death for the Glory of God in the Salvation of mankind.

And

And in other cases Confession may be needless. 1. As: When it is done already, and it is sufficiently known what our mind is, *John* 9. 27. and 18, 19, 20.

2. When it will (as in Christs case it did, *Mark* 1. 44, 45.) hinder the spreading of the doctrine of Religion, stir up Envy, and raise a greater Persecution and Opposition, *Act.* 17. 10.

3. When he that offereth Confession is no way able to maintain the cause of Religion, and so like to make it more contemptible, (unto which some refer that *Mat.* 9. 30.) or will shrink in the wetting, *Act.* 15. 38. wanting Faith and Fortitude to bear the weight of the Cross, *John* 18. 8, 9. Hence they were advised to flee (rather than stay and dissemble) in the *Marian* Persecution that found themselves too weak for the fire.

4. When things are carried in a way of tumult, so that there is an eminent danger to the person confessing (especially, if an eminent person) without hope of helping the truth confessed, as *Act.* 19. 30.

Q. *Secondly, In what cases is confession required?*

A. 1. When called to it by authority, *Mat.*

Mat. 10. 18. *Joh.* 1. 19, 20. especially, more solemnly put upon it, and pressed to it, *Matt.* 16. 63, 64. *John* 18. 37.

2. When it is seriously demanded by others and may make for their edification, by information and confirmation of the truth, 1 *Pet.* 3. 15.

3. When the cause of Religion, the Glory of God, the Salvation and Spiritual good of others, calls us to it: As more particularly;

1. When Christ is to be acknowledged, and there are no others to do it, *Job.* 32. 11, 12. *Luke* 19. 40.

2. (As in this case of *Daniel*) when otherwise wicked men will be imboldened to blaspheme and cry down the cause and truth of God, because none dare appear for it. See *Act* 1. 8. with, *Act.* 4. 10. 18, 19, 29, 33.

3. When the weak will be offended and tempted by our silence and pusillanimity to apostacy, or to that dissimulation, Hypocrisy, and timidity, that is next to apostacy, *Gal.* 2. 14.

The Conclusion may be, the resolution and answering of some Questions and Objections.

1. Q. *We read of no such appearing of* Daniel *in the third Chapter, where there was*

ſuch another decree as this; why ſo much now and nothing then?

A. We muſt not think that he yielded then that is and was ſo faithful and couragious now, and heretofore, *Chap.* 1. 8. but though he forbore to worſhip the Image, yet the accuſing of him was forborn there, (ſo as it is not here) and that, it's very like, becauſe he was in ſo high favour with the King (of whom he had merited ſo much before (*Chap.* 2. 46.) that he was above their reach, and they might rather fear diſpleaſure by oppoſing him than hope to make the King diſpleaſed with him. It was enough that *Daniels* companions that were then ſingled out and accuſed, ſtood to it to the utmoſt; but here *Daniel* himſelf is brought upon the ſtage.

2. Q. *But how comes it to paſs that here, there is no news of any ſtanding up beſides* Daniel, *no not of* Shadrach, Meſchech *and* Abednego, *that were men ſo eminent?*

A. 1. Perhaps thoſe three, (that were not in the Kings Gate, as *Daniel* was, but *ſet over the affairs of the province of Babylon*, Chap. 2. 49.) might not be now at hand, and in ſight of the Authors of this deſign and the great Actors in it; but might be abroad in the Province, retaining

ng their Place and Office in this Kings time, as *Daniel* did his eminency, *Dan.* 6. 3.

2. It's plain that *Daniel* was here the Person aimed at; It's enough that when they, in particular were produced and prosecuted, they were as forward to adventure on the *Furnace*, as *Daniel* here was on the *Den*; (and burning their executioners.)

3. Their miraculous deliverance (*Chap.* 3. 22. 28.) was so famous and fresh in memory, that (though they were present, yet) it was not likely they should be prosecuted anew in a case of the like kind. Gods signal providences at one time, scare his enemies, and are his Childrens safeguard at another, *Esther* 6. 13. *Act.* 5. 11. 26. 39.

4. We do not read that either they, or any other of the Jews were so called to an open Confession as *Daniel* was, because there was not (at least we find not any such thing related) such open praying to God aforetime, used by, and observed in, other Jews as it is recorded here concerning *Daniel*.

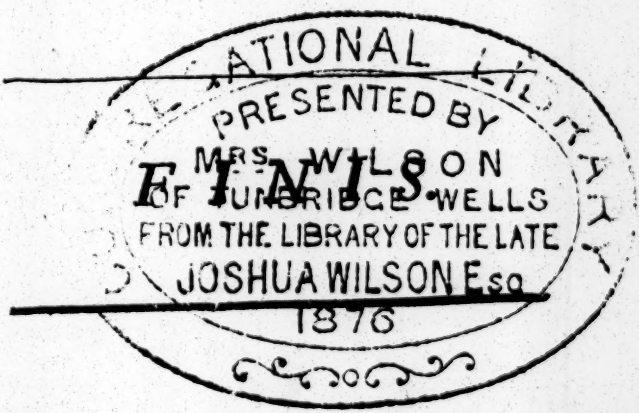
5. Here the case seems like that of *David* and *Goliah*, 1 Sam. 17. 9. *Mordecai* and *Haman*; They two must try it out

in the name of all the reſt, and ſo others might ſtand by, look on, and wait the iſſue of the ſingle combate. In ſuch Projects, yea and Laws, wherein ſome perſons are principally aimed at, others (though they come within the compaſs of the Law) are leſs looked after. But had the buſineſs ſucceeded as the plotters intended, and *Daniel* been devoured, then others of his Religion, might have been like to have fared as he did; whereas (God appearing ſo marvellouſly for the honour and ſafety of his Church and Champions) it repreſented his people to all wiſe men, *Eſth.* 6. 13. as a People that it was dangerous for the greateſt perſons to contend with in the Cauſe of God, that being to contend with God who will always get the better.

Obj. *Faith ſufficeth for Salvation*, Act. 16. 30, 31. *what need therefore of ſuch confeſſion?*

A. 1. It's true that Faith alone is the Grace whereby we receive the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt for our being juſtified and ſaved, *Rom.* 3. 24, 25. *Phil.* 3. 9.

But then, Confeſſion is required alſo upon another account, to wit, not as that whereby Salvation is procured, for that's the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, *Rom.* 5. 21. but as the duty we muſt perform and the way

way we muſt walk in, for the enjoyment of that Salvation (and happy Confeſſion at the laſt day, *Matt.* 10. 32.) which Chriſt purchaſeth, Faith believeth, and the confeſſing Chriſtian (onely, *Mat.* 10. 33.) enjoyeth.

2. There's no oppoſition between theſe two, *believing to Righteouſneſs and confeſſing to Salvation*; for Confeſſion with the mouth, is a fruit of Believing with the heart; *he that believeth, will ſpeak*, Pſal. 116. 10. 2 Cor. 4. 13. (albeit there be many failings and faultrings, *Pſal.* 116. 11.) Faith therefore ſufficeth to Salvation, that is, ſuch a Faith as includeth Confeſſion, and deteſteth denials, *Mat.* 26. 15. and falling away (*Heb.* 10. 38, 39.) And no other Faith.